

JANUARY, 1995

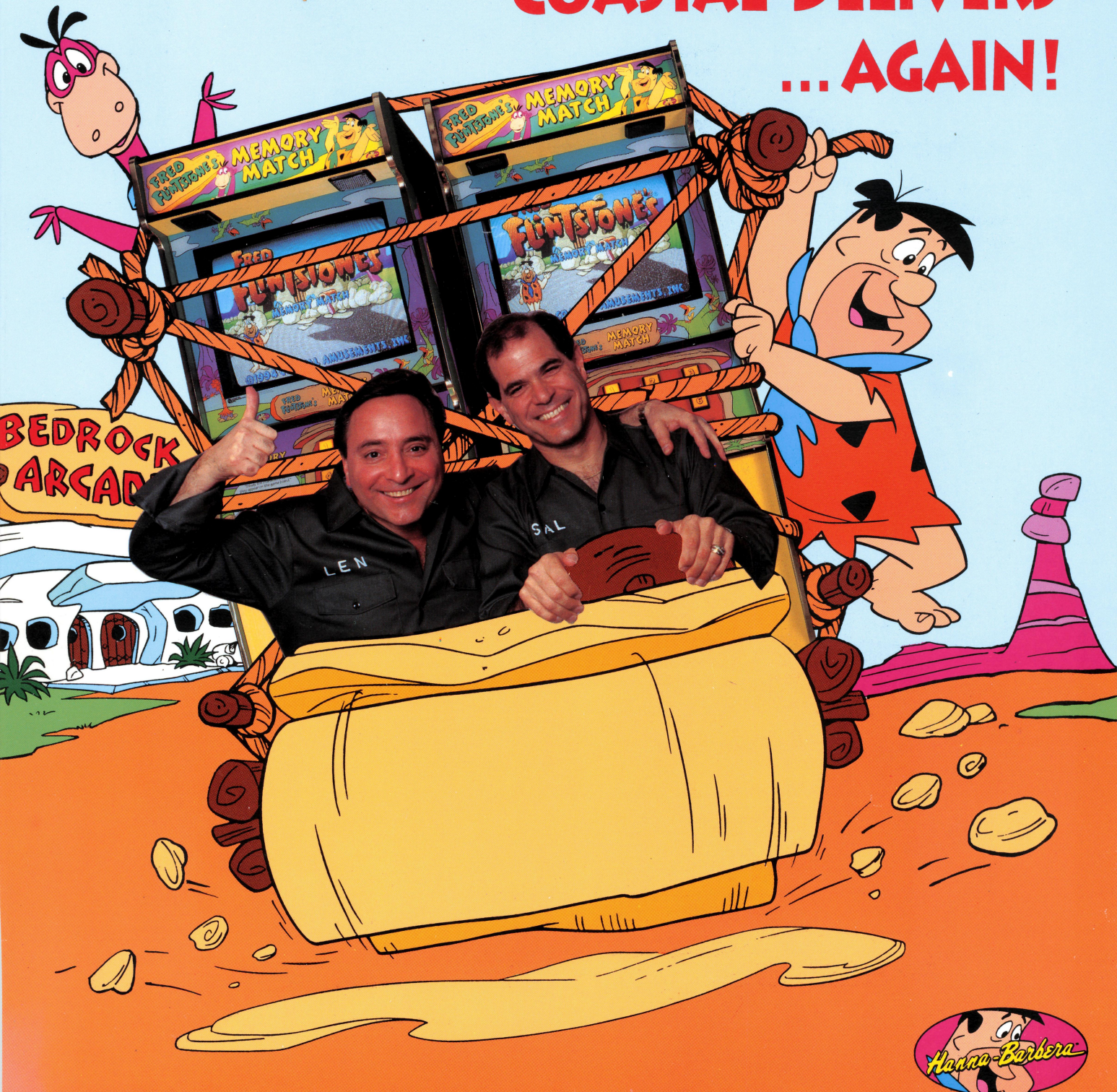
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The Independent Amusement Machine Industry Magazine

magazine

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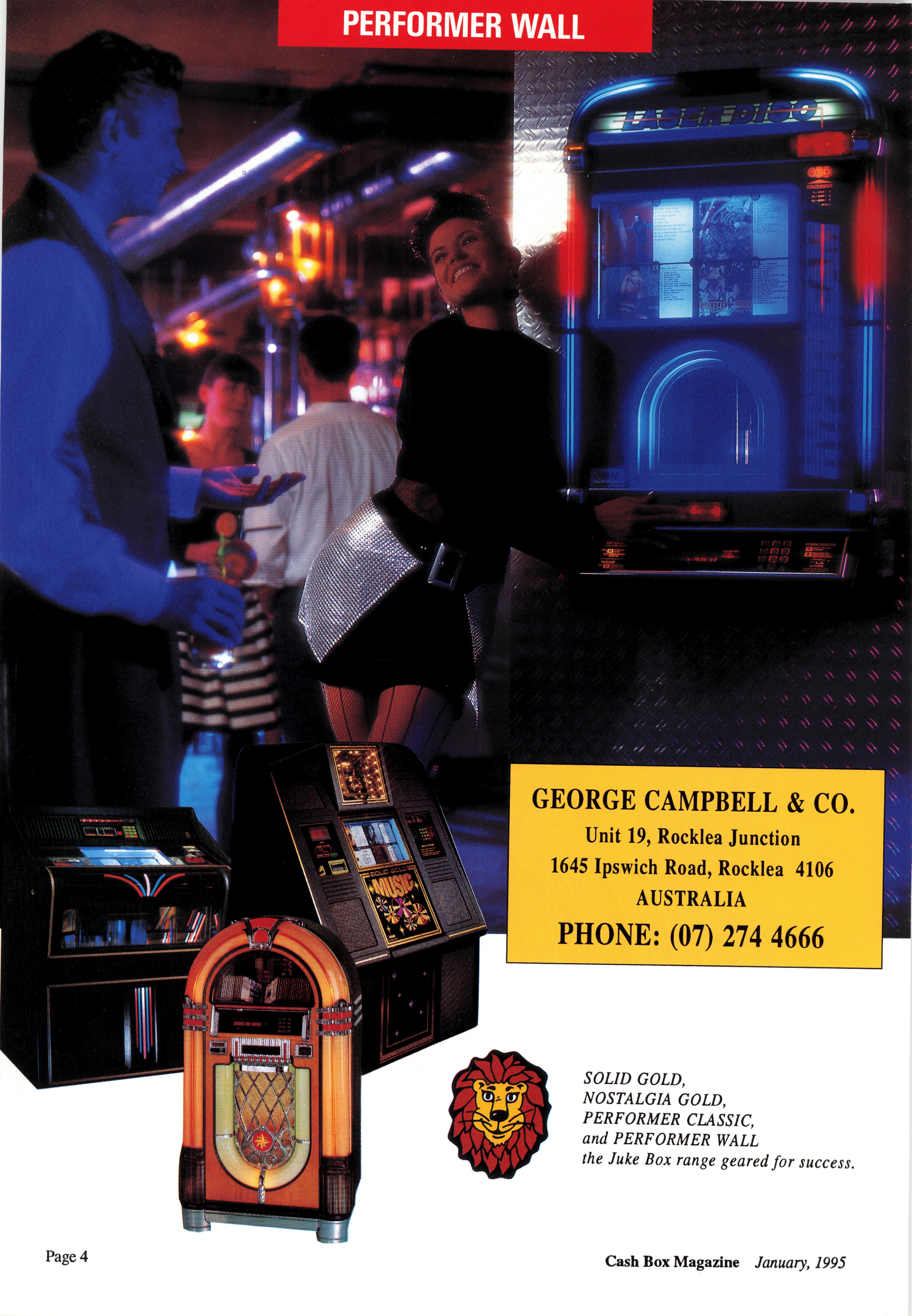
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## JAPAN

### CONSUMER MARKET TO HAVE BIG BEARING ON JAPANESE GAME MAKERS VIABILITY IN 1995

Financial analysts and industry watchers in Japan, expect the huge losses in actual profit, and the even larger losses in estimated profits, experienced by Japanese game manufacturers this year, to be the catalyst for a big shake up in several of the companies affected as the poor results and reasons behind them are studied in detail.

Causing most concern by far is the consumer market with all the biggest losses being attributed to the high value of the yen and year long, consumer resistance that has left huge inventories of both hardware and software, sitting on shelves,

Coin-op, while not strong, has not caused anywhere near the problems of home games, but the bigger companies, with the exception of Namco, are so highly geared towards the consumer market that if it sneezes, the companies can end up with a bad case of the flu.

This is shown clearly in the break up of revenue for the major companies. For example, Sega which we look at as a huge company in coin-op game manufacture and operations, derives *two thirds* of it's total revenue from the consumer game division.

Other companies like Capcom and Konami are similarly geared and all are looking down the barrel of a very tough 1995.

What is of most concern to the number crunchers, however, is not the downgraded profits for the current fiscal year, but the big inventories of home games that are on company books at cost, when with all the new systems hitting the market this year, those inventories of 'old' games and systems, haven't got a snowflakes chance in hell of realising their book value.



These people know that the reluctance of the manufacturers to write off the obvious losses will come back to haunt them at some stage, and hinder future development.

The problem for this industry lies in the paradox that sees the troubled companies as *major* suppliers to coin-op, while coin-op revenue is a now a *minor* part of the huge international operation they have built around consumer games.

There will be some interesting boardroom meetings in downtown Tokyo this year.

## AUSTRALIA

### DAYTONA TWINS KEEP COMING IN REGARDLESS



With production temporarily stopped in Sega plants and the threat of legal action from the 'exclusive' distributor of the game, it was thought that the import of Daytona Twins into Australia would slow considerably over the Christmas period, but the demand has remained so high, importers have had to turn to sourcing used machines from Japan and other countries to satisfy their customers..

Though the Sega game has done well all over the world, it's really hit a chord with Australian players and more Daytona Twins have been brought into the country than any other big dedicated game, ever.

This has had an enormous effect on the market as at \$35K a pop (before the distributor whacked the price up around \$4K to almost \$40,000) the Daytona's are sopping up most of the country's buying dollars.

## WORLD CUP SURPLUS

*Reports keep circulating of there being a huge stockpile of Bally World Cup Pinballs around the world, totalling up to 2000 pieces. One big distributor is said to have had 7 unopened containers sitting around as late as November.*

*Though sales of Pinballs are generally down, the World Cup problem appears to stem from over production.*

## BIG RALLY GAME

*The Daytona Twin is apparently back in production after a break while Virtua Cop and Virtua Fighter II were on the Sega production lines.*

*Orders are still strong for this excellent game, but the word is that Sega's new driving game, tentatively named Pacific Rally, is red hot and could easily up-stage Daytona.*

## PINBALL LEAGUES

*We don't hear much about Pinball Leagues these days? They were one of the most talked about subjects in the industry, this time last year, but it appears operators have lost a lot of enthusiasm for them.*

## FRANKENSTEIN

*The movie has opened strong and the word is that the Pinball, Frankenstein, themed on the movie, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, is a beauty.*

*Made by the former Data East Pinball, Frankenstein is the first game that will carry the Sega brand name on the backglass and it appears that the company has gone all out to make it a winner.*



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## FACT:

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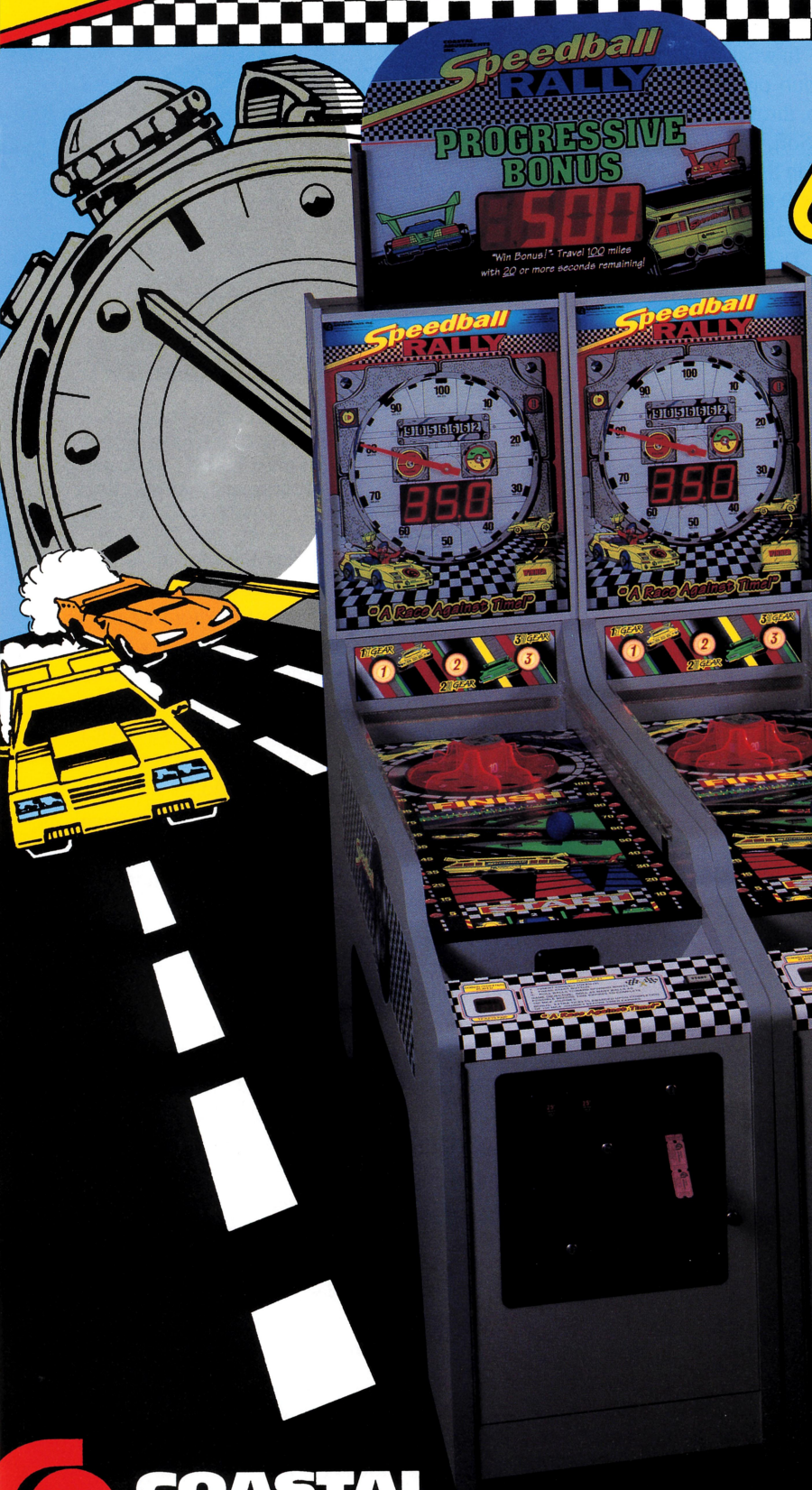
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## PAPA 5 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

New York is the venue for the PAPA 5 Pinball Championships to be held on February 3rd - 5th at the Park Central Hotel on 7th Avenue.

Over 1000 players including National champions from 11 countries will compete in 9 divisions for a purse of over \$30,000 in cash and prizes plus the sought after title of "Worlds Greatest Pinball Player"

For more information contact Sharon Kahn or Susan Jacobs on USA 212 647 1850

## AUSTRALIA

# SEGA START THEIR MOVE ON THE PUBS OF AUSTRALIA .....OR IS IT THE WORLD?

In what could be the start of an assault on the pub operators of the world, Japan's Sega Corp, through their Australian subsidiary Sega Ozi-Soft, have secured several pub locations in Sydney and Melbourne, *at the expense of established operators*, and are installing equipment as we write.

Their earlier stated 'good intentions' (if they were for real) of sharing the sites with existing operators have apparently gone where most good intentions go, as it's been reported to us that they are taking over the whole locations (yep, Pool tables too)

The way we understand it, Sega-Ozi Soft are providing the big machines and videos, while the Pool tables and Pinballs etc are being supplied by an associate company, Total Entertainment Systems Pty Ltd. The Jukeboxes are apparently being installed by Pioneer.

There does remain however, some interesting questions on the viability of the locations to support the quantity of equipment Sega and their associates are installing.

For example, at one location, the Ermington Hotel, in a western suburb of Sydney, they are replacing 2 Pool tables and one Pinball machine with a *Twin Daytona*, 2 player *Stadium Cross*, a *simulated driving game* (probably *Virtua Racing*), 3 upright videos, 8 Pool Tables, 3 Pinballs, a *Soccer Table* and a *Juke Box*.

At least 90% of this equipment will be placed in an upstairs area, away from the bar, which has been tried with Pool tables before and failed miserably.

At another site, the Smithfield Inn, they are said to be replacing one Pinball, one upright video and 4 Pool tables with *two Daytona Twins*, 3 Pinballs, 6 upright video games and 5 Pool tables, with promises of bigger things like the R-360 to come for special promotions.



Knowing the quantity of beer consumed by Oz pub goers and their habits when "blissed", we wouldn't want to be around them when Sega pull them out of an R-360

It's very hard for this writer to believe that the original operators of these sites whom we have known for a long time and who are very successful operators, can be that far out of touch with the industry that they've been running a fraction of the equipment they could have operated.

What Sega- Ozi Soft have done with these sites is seen as the "ultimate overkill", in most operators eyes.

They (operators) know that at the end of the day, all these truckloads of equipment, have to earn their keep for an extended period and on talking to the previous operators at Smithfield, we were told that the Pool Tables did well, the video average, and the Pinball good, but there was nothing to suggest the location could support the amount of equipment that Sega were installing.

Needless to say, the locations will be watched with great interest by Sydney operators.

Most of the locations that Sega have so far secured (five to our knowledge) are owned by Aust Hotels Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of the New Zealand owned Lion Natham Breweries who apparently gave them two pubs in Sydney and two in Melbourne to try out..

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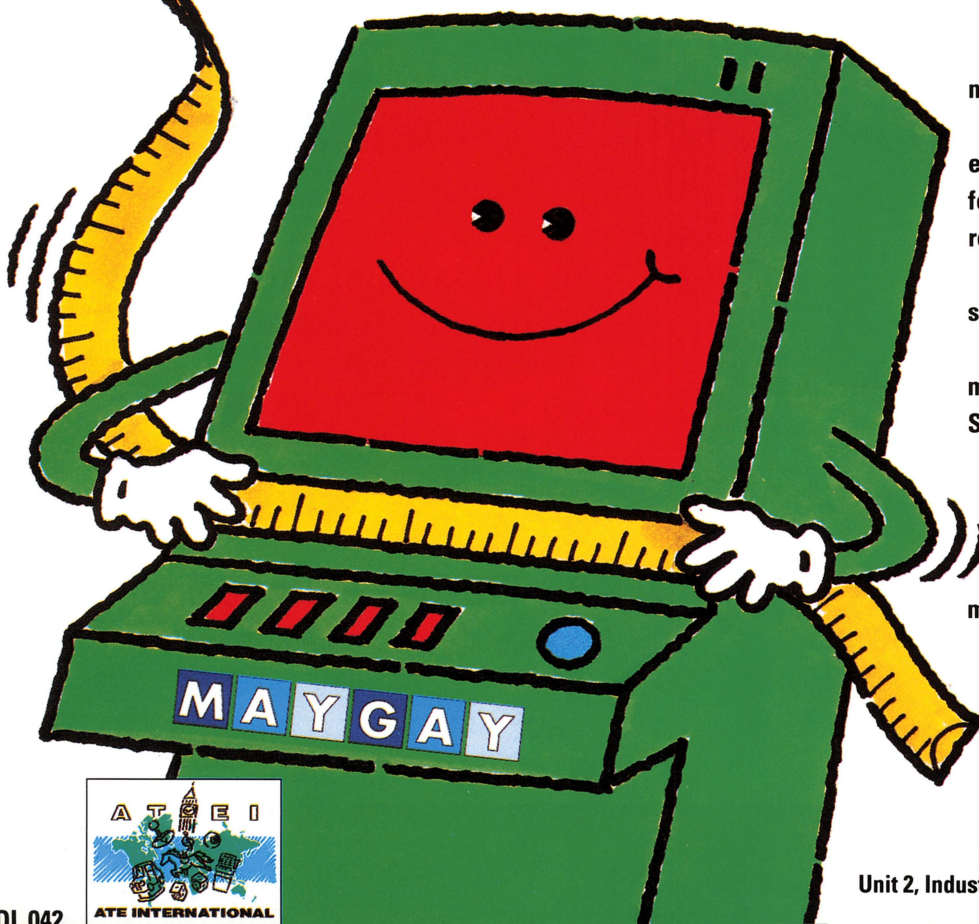
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**Company Secretary**  
Barbara Rodios

**Editor & Publisher:**  
Jack Rodios

**Features Editor:**  
Sidah Russell

**Advertising Manager:**  
Jane Rodios

**Postal Address;**  
PO Box 480, Sutherland  
NSW 2232 Australia

**Tel: + 612 545 0010**

**Fax: + 612 521 1437**

#### Agents & Correspondents

**Europe:** Martin Dempsey  
Ph. +353 45 21190  
Fax: +353 45 21438

**Japan:** Sumio Oka (IMR)  
Ph: +813 3502 0656  
Fax: +813 5706 7349

**China:** Fred Milner  
Ph: +852 487 9089  
Fax: +852 428 1533

**South America:**  
Joao Ghani  
Ph. +55 242 420782

**Editorial Contributors**  
Douglas King  
John Liikala

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**Tellin' it  
like it is**

**With  
Jack Rodios**

*Nothing seems to bring out the merchants of doom and gloom better than Christmas and the thought of a new year. I have no idea why, but these pessimistic pains in the neck always appear to be at their very best, (or worst) come Christmas.*

*Just when normal people want to forget about their problems for a while and enjoy the simple fact that they are still here and able to spend a bit of time with families and friends, the 'doomers' insist on putting a downer on everything coin-op.*

*A good old fashioned pox on them, no breed of being bugs me more than a 'doomer'.*

*I don't know about you, but I get really exasperated with guys who try and talk down this industry which has got so very much going for it.*

*In the 18 odd years I've been in this business, I do not know of one solitary, genuine operator who has gone broke from operating amusement machines.*

*I know several operators who have gone bust dabbling in other things outside of their operations, using their coin-op dollars, and a few fools who got sucked in by sharks in the early 80's, who done their money, but no genuine, full time operators.*

*If you doubt that, search your own memory and see how many you come up with, I know guys with 30 years in the industry who, like me, don't know any.*

*And there's been much tougher periods in days gone by than we are experiencing now. The operators in many of the tough times this industry has weathered, didn't have Neo Geo, Daytona USA, redemption games like the Flintstones or Pinballs like Freddy Krueger to work with, but they still made it through, and most of them have prospered.*

*So enough of this doom and gloom crap, we've got a whole new year starting and it's a year that will see this great industry expand even more, don't listen to the 'doomers' whatever you do, if they start on you, stroke them firmly down the forehead with a chunk of 2 x 4 hardwood and then go out there and make sure you get your share of the available spoils.*

*That way you'll have the great New Year that everyone at Cash Box wishes you.*



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Lo digo tal  
cuales

Nada mejor que las Navidades y la cercanía de un año nuevo para sacar a los comerciantes de su marasmo. No sé por qué, pero estos espasmos pesimistas parecen alcanzar su punto culminante y empeorar después de las Navidades.

Justamente cuando las personas normales y corrientes quieren olvidar sus problemas por un rato y disfrutar de algo tan sencillo como estar aquí todavía y, poder compartir su tiempo con familiares y amigos, los fatalistas insisten en desprestigiar todo lo que se opera con monedas.

Ningún bicho viviente me molesta más que un pesimista, es una maldición valedera que pesa sobre ellos.

No sé cómo piensa Ud., pero a mi realmente me exasperan esos tipos que tratan de desprestigiar esta industria que tiene tanto que ofrecer.

Approximadamente, en los 18 años que llevo en este negocio, so he conocido ni a un solo agente verdadero que se haya fundido por operar en el ramo de las máquinas de juegos.

Conozco varios adentes que han reventado al tratar otras líneas, usando los dolares que hicieron gracias a las máquinas operadas con monedas, y a unos pocos tontos que fueron devorados por los

tiburones al comienzo de los 80, que perdieron su dinero, pero no a agentes verdaderos dedicados a esto po completo.

Si lo duda, hurgue en su memoria, a ver a cuántos puede encontrar. Sé de compañeros que llevan 30 años en el ramo y que como yo no saben de ningún caso.

Anteriormente, hemos atravesado tiempos más difíciles que los que estamos viviendo ahora. En muchos de estos periodos tuvimos que capear el temporal y, los agentes no contaban para trabajar con Neo Geo, Daytona USA, con juegos salvadores como los Flinstones, o como Freddy Krueger, pero pasaron el río y muchos de ellos prosperaron.

Basta ya de tanta basura fatalista y catastrófica, tenemos antes nosotros todo un año nuevo en sus comienzos y, será un nuevo año que verá crecer esta industria aún más. No preste atención a estos pesimistas, haga lo que haga, si la cogen con Ud., delen un golpe fuerte por debajo de las cejas con un pedazo de madera dura de 2 x 4 y, entonces salga a afuera y asegúrese de obtener su parte del botín.

Así tendrá gran Año Nuevo que todos le deseamos en Cash Box.



Das Kind beim  
Namen nennen

Nichts scheint die Verkuender von Untergang und Hoffnungslosigkeit schneller zutage zu bringen als Weihnachten und der Gedanke an ein neues Jahr. Ich weiss absolut nicht, warum-aber diese pessimistischen, auf die Nerven gehenden, Menschen scheinen besonders gut (oder schlecht) zu sein, wenn die Weihnach-tszeit bevorsteht.

Gerade, wenn normale Menschen ihre Problems fuer eine Weile vergessen wollen und die einfache Tatsache, dass sie noch immer mit dabei sind und ein bisschen Zeit mit ihrer Familie und ihren Freunden verbringen koennen, geniesses wollen, bestehen die "Untergaengler" darauf, einen Daempfer auf alles, was mit Automaten zu tun hat, zu setzen.

Soll sie ein ganz altmo-discher Teufel holen-kein Wesen treibt mich so auf die Palme wie ein "Untergaengler".

Ich weiss nicht, was Sie davon halten, aber Leute, die diese Industrie, die so viel zu bieten hat, runtermachen wollen, machen mich wuetend.

In den ungefaehr 18 Jahren, die ich im Gaeschaeft bin, kenne ich keinen einzigen echten Betreiber, der durch das Betreiben von Vergnuegungs-automaten Pleite gegangen ist.

Ich kenne mehrere Betreiber, die kaputt gegangen sind, weil sie mit anderen Dingen ausserhalb ihres Betriebes unter Gebrauch der Automaten-Dollar herumgefummelt haben und einige Dummkoepfe,

die Anfang der 80er Jahre durch Gauner ausgenommen worden sind und ihr Geld verloren haben, aber keine echten, voll arbeitenden Betreiber.

Wenn Sie das bezweifeln, suchen Sie in ihrem eigenen Gedaechnis nach und sehen Sie, wieviele Sie dort finden. Ich kenne Leute, die seit 30 Jahren in der Industrie sind, und wie ich von keinem wissen.

Und es hat schon viel schlimmere Zeiten in der Vergangenheit gegeben als wir sie jetzt durchmachen. Die Betreiber in jenen schlimmen Zeiten, die diese Industrie ueberstanden hat, hatten meist kein Neo Geo, Daytona USA, keine Spiele wie die Flinstones oder Spielautomaten wie Freddy Kreueger, mit denen sie arbeiten konnten, aber sie kamen durch, und die meisten von ihnen waren erfolgreich.

Deshalb - genug vom Quatsch von Untergang und Hoffnungslosigkeit - wir haben ein ganzes neues Jahr, das gerade beginnt, und es ist ein Jahr, in dem wir sehen werden, wie diese grosse Industrie sich noch mehr entfaltet. Hoeren Sie nicht auf die "untergaengler"; was immer Sie auch tun moegen, wenn sie bei Ihnen anfangen, streicheln Sie sie fest an der Stirn runter mit einem dicken Stueck Hartholz, und dann gehen Sie raus und sorgen dafuer, dass Sie Ihren Anteil an der vorhandenen Beute erhalten.

Auf diese weise wird das neue Jahr so grossartig fuer Sie, wie alle bei Cash Box es Ihnen wuenschen.



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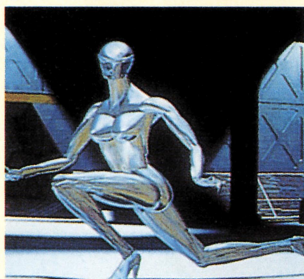


## UNITED KINGDOM

### BELL'S "RISE OF ROBOTS" TO GET INTERNATIONAL JUDGEMENT AT ATEI

UK operators have shown their enthusiasm for Bell Fruit's new fighting game, *Rise of the Robots* already, but the big test for the game will be it's showing at ATEI this month when it will come under the eyes of a huge international group of buyers for the first time.

Don't be surprised if *Rise of the Robots* turns out a very handy game



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## PUERTO RICO

### MONDIAL OPEN HOUSE HOSTS ONE OF ISLAND'S BEST PARTIES

Mondial International's brand new branch office in Puerto Rico was the site of one of the island's best parties this year when over 150 operators helped welcome the big distributor to it's new store.



Premier's LJ Greene and Taito's Carlos Laguardia give Freddy Krueger a work-out at the Mondial Open House.

The big crowd of operators enjoyed a lavish buffet and open bar while checking out the latest coin-op equipment with Mondial's Fernando Galeb and Branch Manager Ivonne Rivera. Operator interest, plus the very liberal supply of food and drink, kept the party hopping well past midnight.

Richard Sarkisan, Mondial's Executive VP, flew in from New York to cut the ribbon of the new branch building and

said that though he expected a good turnout for the opening, the crowd present was much bigger than what was hoped for.

Appreciating how much it can benefit them, Puerto Rican operators were very enthusiastic about Mondial's opening of the sales and support facility on the island

## PUERTO RICO

### ROWE AMI VISIT PR DISTRIBUTORS AND OPERATORS

Rowe AMi's Joel Friedman and Phil Cole were enthusiastically welcomed in Puerto Rico when they visited distributors and operators of the company's products.



Open Houses and training workshops were held at Funny & Fun, James Industries and Mondial International. Operator attendance was very heavy at all three functions, and Phil Cole's educational seminars were attended by well over 100 operators that came from every region in Puerto Rico.

Rowe's Phil Cole takes Puerto Rico operators through the LaserStar Diamante CD at his Funny & Fun seminar

Joel Friedman joined Carlos Rivera of Funny & Fun in the grand opening of the new Funny & Fun distribution operation and also attended the opening of Mondial's new Puerto Rican facility.

Joel also visited many locations on the island where the Rowe AMi Jukebox line has been very well accepted by operators





## HONG KONG

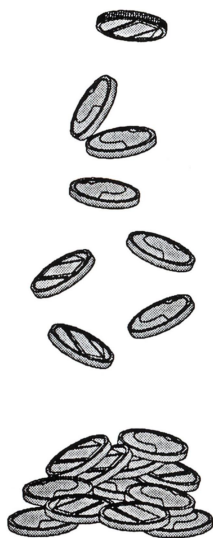
### NEW \$10 COIN SEEN AS A BOON FOR COIN-OP

While America dithers over a \$1 coin, other countries are moving more and more to coins of higher value with the newest being Hong Kong's \$10 coin which is worth a touch over US\$2.

Operators in Hong Kong believe the new \$10 coin will give the industry a big lift and are moving quickly to install coin mechanisms that will accommo-

date the coin as some of the bigger dedicated games are now on \$10 play and though the price has met little resistance, the feeding of several coins has.

The new coin will probably see electronic multi coin mechanisms also take off in the colony as they have in other countries where higher valued coinage has been introduced.



## AGE RESTRICTIONS

The major trade association in Taiwan, the China Hi-Tech Amusement Machine Association, is endeavouring to draw up a new set of proposals relating to the Taiwanese coin machine laws, that will be acceptable to the Government.

Though no one seems to be able to make up their minds on an actual age, it seems certain that the main plank of the associations proposals will be centred around age limitations for children playing amusement games.

The Government is coming under increasing pressure from the media and parent groups over young children having easy access to such games.

## CRANES BANNED

The operation of coin-op cranes in Indonesia has been at least temporarily banned by the Government after many machines were found to be illegally loaded with cigarettes.

Over 2200 machines have been pulled out of the market at this stage with still more to come from some of the islands. Some of the country's more responsible operators have made overtures to the Government to rescind the over-all ban in favour of instituting heavy penalties for operators using the machines illegally, and they believe this move could be successful, and reasonably quickly.

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*FunFever (Family Entertainment  
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## UNITED STATES

# TALK OF TRADE SHOW "GRAND PRIX" AS CALENDAR STRETCHES TO UNWORKABLE LEVELS

### ◆ LITTLE KIDS TARGETED

*Every little kid on the planet may as well be walking around with a big bull's-eye tattooed on his forehead, so surely are they the prime target of the amusement industry.*

*This follows an enormous rise in interest for Kiddie Rides, Soft Play units and the type of fun attractions that enable the little guys to play with the bigger guys.*

Major Trade Show organisers and many of the big manufacturers are getting a bit concerned over the number of exhibitions that are on the calendar, and there is even talk in some circles of a Trade Show "Grand Prix", or a select round of major events where the major manufacturers will exhibit and a 'B' grade circuit which will be left to regional distributors and local manufacturers.

The "Grand Prix" concept would see six major international Trade shows being developed, London's ATEI, possibly the two US Shows, AMOA Expo and ACME, Japan's AM Show, one event in South East Asia, probably in Hong Kong or Singapore and one in South



America, probably SALEX. (IMA in Germany would also come under consideration if it was held at a different time of the year)

The select circuit idea sees the six or seven major events being split up into two show periods with manufacturers exhibits being shipped direct from one show to the next for the 3 or 4 events in the particular period.

There's obviously a few holes in the draft proposal, (they seem to have ignored IAAPA and Fun Expo) but there probably is some merit in the general idea as it's getting a very costly exercise to have a presence at the majority of events.

The scenario sees the worlds major exhibitors having a proposal along these lines put to them this year, in time for it to be put into place by 1997, if (and it's a real big "if") agreement can be struck.

## CHINA

# GALLOPING INFLATION SLOWS ECONOMIC REFORM

China's economic growth which has averaged 13% in the past two years is being savagely undermined by an inflation rate that's reached as high as 27% in 35 major cities. The high inflation rate has forced many loss making, state owned enterprises to face the spectre of bankruptcy and is now starting to seriously affect foreign investment which is a key factor in the plans for economic reform.

After a flurry of activity by sectors of the international coin-op industry to have a presence in China, both investment and enthusiasm have dropped off considerably and it's unlikely that there will be any change in that position until the Chinese Government find a way to handle the inflation without stalling economic growth.

Cash Box International January, 1995



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◆ *Jaleco have a new driving game set for release that is said to be the best game of this type the company has produced. Probably see it at ATEI*

## TAIWAN

### TAM BRINGS 'HARD GAMING' LINK TO AMUSEMENT GAMES ISSUE OUT INTO OPEN

The mixing of 'Hard Gaming' with bona fide amusement games at Trade Shows and in magazines, appears likely to become a major issue in the industry as many coin-op manufacturers believe the mixing of the two genres is prejudicial to the amusement machine business.

SNK voiced their disapproval at

TAM, the Taiwan Amusement Machine Exhibition late last year, saying that the Taiwanese market was big enough to support separate shows for 'hard' gaming and amusements and it appears that many other companies, though silent to date, agree with these sentiments.

The issue seems certain to now come out into the open as it becomes clear that amusement machine exhibitors are becoming increasingly fed up with the exhibition organisers and magazines, that are intent on linking 'hard' gaming with genuine amusements.

They see the desire of these people to tap the obvious wealth of the gaming industry, as doing the bona fide amusement industry a great disservice.

The vague link that exists between the two industries is seen as being ideally catered for in London each year where a separate gaming exhibition is held at the same time, and adjacent to ATEI.

## AUSTRALIA

### LUNA PARK LOCKED IN CONTROVERSY

Those waiting for the famed inner city fun park, Luna Park to reopen had better not hold their breath as the project remains locked in controversy over a five storey high Roller Coaster that is currently being built on the site.

Residents of nearby apartments have instigated legal proceedings on at least three fronts to stop the operation of the Roller Coaster which the new operators of the park say is essential to it's financial viability.

Built at Milsons Point, on the northern side of Sydney Harbour, Luna Park is situated on one of the highest priced pieces of real estate in the country and has been idle for over five years after fire and accidents forced it's closure.

*Late news suggests Sega are looking to get involved with the park.*

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## UNITED KINGDOM

### HUGE TAX ON AMUSEMENT MACHINES SENDS SHOCKWAVES AROUND COIN-OP INDUSTRY

The new Amusement License Duty imposed on the UK industry in the recent budget has sent shockwaves through the coin-op industry and seems certain to devastate at least the video and Pinball markets.

All is not yet clear however, as there seems to be a few conundrums in the new tax of £250.00 per machine which is to come into force next November.

On videos for example, the tax appears to apply to each playing station which would completely destroy the PCB market in 2, 3 and 4 player games.

Pinballs are a flat £250.00 and though it was first thought that the new tax covered items like Juke Boxes, Pool Tables, etc, it now seems that they and 5p SWP's that payout up to £6 are exempt.

There's also some confusion on our reports, regarding AWP's, but though the AWP situation is a bit fuzzy at time of writing, the doubt is not over whether they have incurred

more tax, but simply how much more they have been hit with.

This Government grab for revenue has come on top of the recent introduction of a National Lottery which is already having discomfiting affects on the AWP market and would appear to have effectively wiped out all the progress made by the industry in Britain over the last few years, leaving many operators, big and small, pondering the viability of their businesses.

BACTA, the British association is preparing to fight the new tax and will be making strong representations to the Government before it's passed into Law, pointing out the economics of the tax which though raising some £60 million for the Government, could cost as many as 15,000 jobs and many millions in lost VAT when machines are inevitably removed from operation. BACTA members are also being asked to write to their local members.



#### ◆ JALECO DOWN TOO

*Jaleco Ltd are the latest Japanese manufacturer to report a drastically revised fiscal forecast for the financial year ending March 1995. They now predict a loss of ¥800 million for the year.*

*The company blames a deterioration in the coin-op games market, plus much lower than expected demand for home games and will now cut their losses on the huge, home game inventory they are holding and dispose of them in lesser markets around the world.*

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## UNITED STATES

### HAPP'S NEW PARTS CATALOGUE

Happ Controls, one of the largest suppliers of components to the coin industry, has published their largest product catalogue ever and it's available free to operators.

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## SPOTLIGHT ON JAPAN

### HOME GAMES WAR

The first blood was let in the looming home game system war when Sega slashed the domestic price of their long awaited Saturn system by US\$50 to \$445, and the Tokyo Stock Exchange reacted by ripping a quick 6% off the value of Sega shares.

It's believed the price of \$445 will leave very little margin in the hardware for Sega and the US\$3.40 drop in the company's share value, with the pundits predicting further falls in the New Year, indicates just how much stockholders feel, is hinging on the Saturn system being successful in the consumer market.

\*\*\*\*\*

Still on home games and the giant, Japanese entertainment company Sony have entered the arena and released their 32 bit "Play Station" system at US\$395. This system will take *Ridge Racer* and other top line Namco and Konami games into the homes, giving both Sega and Nintendo something more to contend with in their quest for market dominance.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CAPCOM vs DATA EAST

Capcom and Data East have settled their copyright differences over similarities between *Fighters History* and *SFII*. The cases in both Japan and the USA have been terminated with each party agreeing to pay their own costs.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CHARTS

Hardly surprising when SNK's *Samurai Shodown II* slipped straight into the top spot on Japanese conversion game charts. The very good Neo Geo



game has a clear margin over *Virtua Fighter* which continues to hold favour, and *King of Fighters '94* which is also holding up well. Apart from *Samurai Shodown II*, other newcomers to do well initially are Taito's *Bubble Symphony* and Capcom's *Armoured Warriors* at #3 and #4 respectively.

In dedicated games, Sega's *Sports Fishing* is a clear #1 from *Virtua Cop* and *Daytona Twin*. Namco's gun game, *Point Blank* made it's debut at #4.

Pinball takings are way down with *Royal Rumble* holding onto the top spot from *Lethal Weapon 3* and *Jurassic Park*

\*\*\*\*\*

### ECONOMY

Even many of the big Japanese amusement centres are experiencing a downturn on last years winter figures as the Japanese economy marks time with the unheard of threat of unemployment hanging over it.

The high value of the yen, once the country's major asset is now a handicap to the manufacturing industries whose exports have slumped alarmingly.



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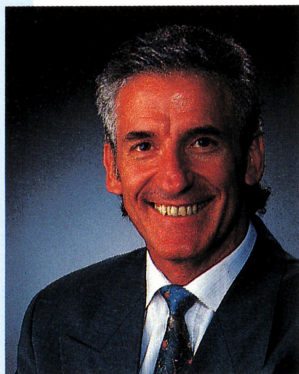


## AUSTRALIA

### NEW PRESIDENT FOR NAMOA

The NAMOA (National Amusement Machine Operators Association) seems certain now to appoint Frank Sebastyan of Adelaide as the new President following George Campbell standing down in November.

Sebastyan has had extensive association experience having presided over the very successful South Australian association for more than 20 years and filling an active position on the Board of the NAMOA concurrently.



Frank Sebastyan

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## UNITED STATES

### DYNAMO RECEIVES AMERICA'S TOP EXPORT HONOUR

Dynamo Ltd, the pool, soccer and air hockey table manufacturer, has been awarded the President's "E" Award for Excellence in Exporting. The announcement was made by US Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, and the award was presented to Dynamo by US Congressman Joe Barton.

The President's "E" Award, created in 1961, recognises firms and organisations for their competitive achievements in world markets, as well as the benefits of their success to the US economy.

"This is a fantastic tribute to all of us at Dynamo," said Bill Rickett, founder of the company. "Our employees take great pride in their work. To be honoured by the President and recognised as one of the nation's most dynamic companies heightens the enthusiasm in all of us," he added.



Dynamo founder, Bill Rickett (centre) and US Congressman Joe Barton prepare to hoist the President's "E" Award flag over Dynamo headquarters in Dallas

Today Dynamo Ltd's annual sales are in excess of \$30 million. Since 1991, Dynamo has experienced double digit increases each year in both domestic and export sales and the company is exporting its products to 35 countries throughout the world.

## UNITED STATES

### FORMER NSM WIZ TO ROCK-OLA

AA/Rock-Ola President, Glenn Streeter has announced the appointment of Mike Jablonski, (the long time technical wiz at NSM) as Director of Technical Services at the company's ever expanding Rosemont, Illinois facility.

Mike left NSM in September to work with his brother managing a chain of Sluggers Sports Bars in Chicago, but Streeter, who was firmly of the belief that Jablonski was too young to retire from the Jukebox industry, secured him for Rock-Ola where his duties will include technical/engineering support, training and schools.

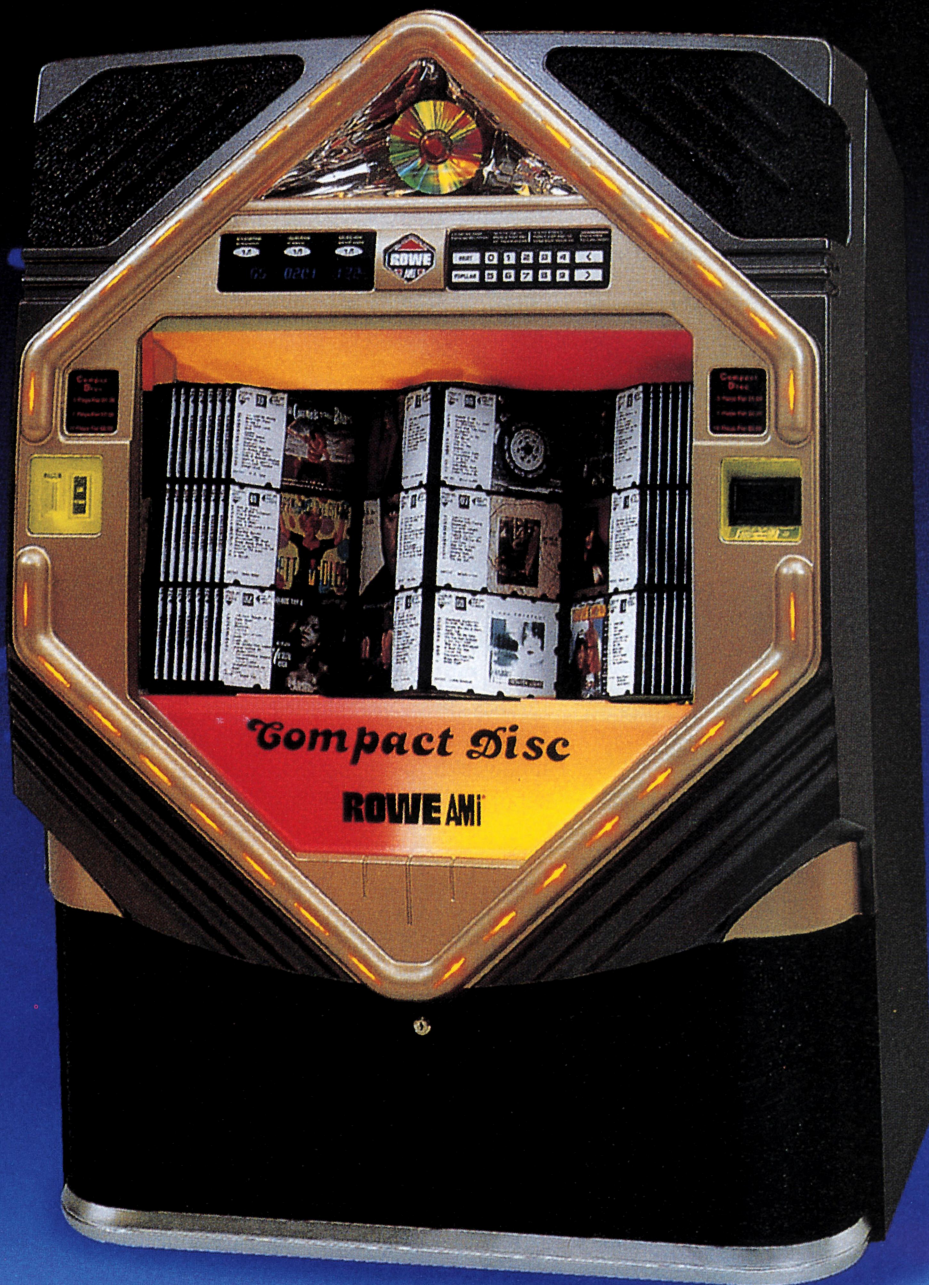


Mike Jablonski

Mike Jablonski is delighted to be involved with Rock-Ola's American made Jukeboxes, now celebrating their 60th anniversary, and will take up his position after a training and familiarisation stint at both the Torrance and Rosemont plants.



THE DAY THE MUSIC BECAME MORE BEAUTIFUL



# Introducing LaserStar® Diamante

If you think the Rowe/AMi LaserStar series got attention in the past, wait until you see the Diamante. This new jewel of the LaserStar line is so beautiful it will immediately grab centre stage and never get off. This spectacular diamond will play and play to the tune of increased profits. Now, that's a really beautiful sound.

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## THE PHILLIPINES

### NEW "TIME OUT" CENTRE FOR QUEZON CITY

#### ◆ ICE HAVE NEW REDEMPTION "KILLER"

*Seldom has a company head been so enthused over a new product as Ralph Coppola of ICE is about the company's new redemption game that is now going into production.*

*No details at this point, but in the bosses words,*

*"Tests have been unbelievable, basically the neatest, best looking, and most fun to play ticket splitter in the business"*

*From a company that's produced the good games ICE have, that's a fair wrap.*



Fred Milner of Bondeal, Hong Kong, together with his partners, Fun Corp of the Philippines have opened their latest "Time Out" family fun centre at the Ever Gotesco Commonwealth Shopping Mall in Quezon City, a suburb of Metro Manilla.

The mall is built in the style of a European castle, making it an impressive sight from afar.

The new 850 sq. metre "Time Out" continues with the sports theme used in all the Time Out centres throughout South East Asia. This particular one has many large, comic-style sportsmen hanging from the ceiling, for visual effect.

Another feature in the centre is a tower erected in the middle of the play area. There are games on the tower itself and the redemption counters are located under it.

In addition to dedicated and upright video games, the centre has the Time Out chain's first soft play area which Milner believes have an enormous future in Family Centres and which will be incorporated in all Time Out centres in the foreseeable future

## AUSTRALIA

### SA AMOA IN NEW INITIATIVE

The South Australian AMOA, always striving for ways to develop a harmonious relationship between member operators have come up with another new initiative that is an Australian 'first'

The association is organising a Family Fun Day Picnic at the beautiful Belair National Park on Sunday 19th February where members and other operators can bring staff, associates, friends and most importantly their families for a fun day of sporting and other activities. And it's totally FREE! (except for alcohol) The cost of the day will be borne by the association through sponsorship from within the industry.

Those attending should book with Mike Parsons on (08) 364 0500 or Fax, (08) 364 0845



The organising committee of the Fun Day. From left: Andrew Le, Gerald Morgam, Mike Parsons, Chris Hamono

## SPAIN

### SKEE-BALL TO SUPPLY MIDWAY GAMES

Skee-Ball has recently been contracted to supply a full scale American style midway game program to Port Aventura, a major theme park under construction in Salou, Spain scheduled to open in several months.

Skee-Ball's European operations manager, Jeff Hudson, worked with park officials to assist in designing the games area and selecting the types of games which will be featured. Among the games selected were favourites such as Basketball, Milk Can, Cat Rack, Water Race group games and the new Skee-Ball Lightning game introduced in September of last year.

In addition to manufacturing the equipment, Skee-Ball will provide a cash control and management system and installation services. The project is expected to be completed in February of 1995.

Skee-Ball was selected for the project because of their experience in introducing American-style midway games to Europe. The company has already completed projects for the UK's Thorpe Park, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Chessington World of Adventures and Germany's Holiday Park, among others.

#### ◆ SHAQ ATTACKS

*Premier's new Pinball, Shaq Attaq has generated unprecedented pre delivery orders in Australia just on sight. Local distributor, Mothers Imports is having trouble accommodating prospective buyers out of the first shipment and is trying desperately to get the second shipment brought forward as we go to print.*

#### ◆ BALL-TIMER TO SPREAD OUT OF EUROPE

*With the spread of new style Pool Lounges and increase in popularity, Heinrich Dolp of Ball Timer Systems is confident that countries outside Europe, where the Ball-Timer is very widely used, will soon embrace the timed play concept which has proven many times over that Pool and Billiard tables equipped with the electronic timing device can generate much higher revenue while cutting operating costs.*



# LATE NEWS

## SEGA CLAIMING COPYRIGHT BREACH IN EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS LITIGATION

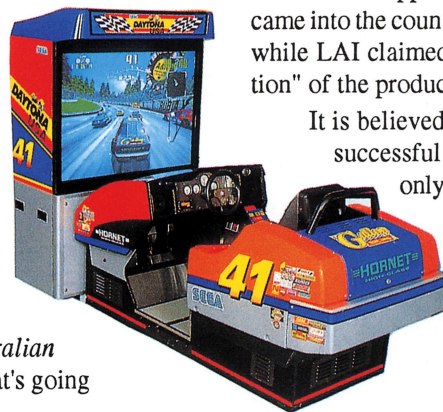
Sega Enterprises Ltd of Japan, in conjunction with Australian distributor Leisure & Allied Industries (LAI) who claim exclusive distribution have filed a Statement of Claim against operator/distributor, Galaxy Electronics Pty Ltd for infringing on Sega's Copyright, by operating and exhibiting a genuine, *Sega made machine*.

This is the opening gambit in a game of extremely high stakes as the ensuing litigation will have far reaching effects on everyone involved in the coin-op industry in Australia and many from other countries.

The Australian coin-op industry was quick to realize this with the National operators association (NAMOA) moving within 24 hours of the claim being served, to take over the coordination of the defence to the claim, and every distributor of note in the country contacted by CBI, pledging strong financial support.

The technical side of the claim and background to this extraordinary move by Sega, (though fully expected from LAI) will be printed next month,

but the support of the NAMOA and Australia's distributors has quickly changed this case from being Sega and LAI vs Galaxy Electronics, to *Sega and LAI vs the entire Australian Coin-op Industry*. And that's going to be a Hell of a fight.



Though Virtua Cop is the game mentioned in the claim, the catalyst for this litigation was surely the earlier Sega game, Daytona USA, of which some 300 of a total of approximately 400 pieces, came into the country as parallel imports while LAI claimed "exclusive distribution" of the product.

It is believed that if Sega/LAI are successful the outcome will not only make parallel imports of dedicated games illegal, but also overturn the 1991 Mothers Imports decision that freed the parallel import of PCB's

## LATE NEWS 2

### NEW REDEMPTION GAME TESTS OVER THE MOON

The new redemption game from ICE Inc, mentioned elsewhere in this issue has now been identified as *Cyclone*, a game which recent testing has shown, is capable of incredible earnings, comfortably "knocking off" big dedicated video games like Daytona (which costs 4 times as much) in one large arcade.

The game is a three player piece with progressive Jackpot that has no moving parts (except the players constantly groping for their wallets) and will start shipping this month

Mark this one down as a game you must check out at ATEI or wherever it is shown, *it's hot!*

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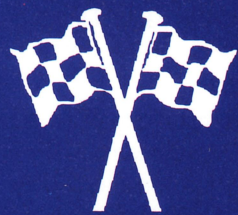
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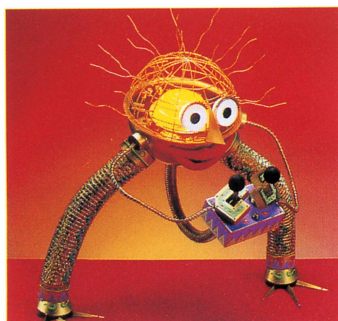
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The Electronic Virtua Crystal Ball 33

# CRYSTAL BALL CORNER

## KILLER INSTINCT

**Question:** What's the future hold for Killer Instinct, VCB 33?

**VCB33:** I told you all there is to know about Killer Instinct in that video interview. I told you that good games would come out of places other than Japan and that the price of video games was going to skyrocket.

Killer Instinct was designed in the UK, made in the USA, and it costs an arm and a leg. What more do you want to know?

**Question:** Is it worth the money asked, can it bring players back to video games and what sort of life can we expect from it.

**VCB33:** No, No and so-so.

**Question:** Would you like to elaborate?

**VCB33:** There's nothing really to elaborate on, though to be fair, before the answer to whether it's worth the price or not is answered, the question of will it bring players back must be addressed, because if it's not strong enough to bring players back, it ain't worth the money.

I can't see it bringing players back in big numbers, it's a fighting game, a pretty one, but also one that's full of violence, don't you humans read the bloody newspapers? Everyone jumping up and down over violence, so you make more violent games. Anyway, the game play is quite good, but once again, hardly different or innovative

To sum up, the fact that it's built on Nintendo's new 64 bit system and has brilliant graphics are plus factors, but what else has it got that countless other fighting games haven't got? Not a lot, certainly not enough to make it the huge hit or guaranteed winner that a lot of people would have you believe it's going to be.

Killer Instinct with full blood and guts is a good game, but not a super

duper game and it's very expensive for a joystick fighting game.

It will take some good money, particularly in the USA, but will not reach the dizzy heights that the hype surrounding it suggests it's capable of, and will find it very hard in some areas to justify it's price

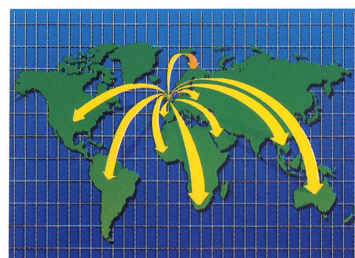
## COIN-OP IN 1995

**Question:** What's in store for the coin-op industry in 1995

**VCB 33:** You hardly need a high tech crystal ball like me for this, but since you asked; (a) In dedicated video, bigger games, bigger prices, bigger earnings, (b) Pinball takings steady, but some big surprises in this sector, (c) Severe pain for some coin-op manufacturers that are deep into home video games, (d) The move to Redemption on the street to accelerate, (e) In conversion games, Taito to rise from video Limbo on back of F3 System, but Neo Geo to still hold all the Aces, (f) "F" is for FEC's, Future profit and the Fun you will have in 1995 when the cash boxes will be considerably Fuller.

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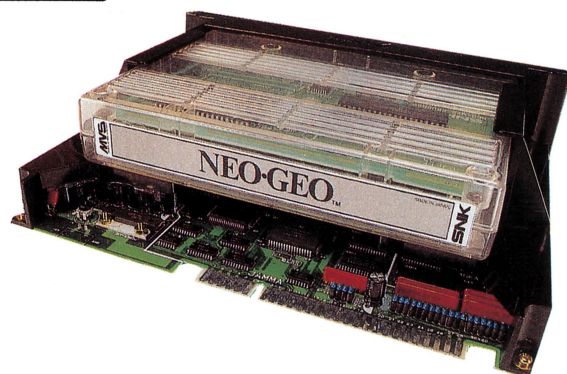
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## STREET GAMES

# NEO GEO #1



It's very easy here in 1995 to embrace Neo Geo and applaud SNK for the way they have continued to support and develop the system, but it would have to be right to say that in May 1990 when the Neo Geo system was released, many more operators doubted it's worth than really appreciated it for what it was.

And it would also be right to say that of those who did appreciate the technology of the system, a large percentage were sceptical of SNK supporting it with the number of games they pledged to make.

To be fair, most operators had good reason to be a bit sceptical as prior to Neo Geo the industry had been bombarded with systems and promises of game support by several manufacturers, and nothing of much note had come from it.

When SNK's system was looked into however, it could be seen that Neo Geo was not like any other system, and SNK's approach to it was not like any other company.

They didn't just add the Neo Geo to their range of products which included at the time, dedicated games like Beast Buster and PCB games, they completely

stopped production of any other video products and put all their eggs into the Neo Geo basket.

It didn't take long for that confidence in the new product to bear fruit, Neo Geo in the next few years became an industry staple and has continued to hold operators favour to this day.

With more than 50 Neo Geo games produced since the introduction of the system, the cynicism has gone and Neo Geo is in fact seen by many operators around the world as the only feasible way to operate video games in the current industry environment.

The more recent batch of games is collectively the best yet produced, King of Fighters, '94, Samurai Shodown II from SNK, Street Hoop from Data East, plus the older Super Sidekicks 2 and Aero Fighter 2 make an imposing line up and one that operators all round the world are flocking to. And there's likely to be more new releases at this month's ATEI in London.

Operators preferences of the best way to operate the Neo Geo system differ in different countries, many basically stick to the single game concept on the JAMMA compatible MV-1FZ mother board, others go for the two, four or six game board, all successfully so there's no single rule for operation.

It has been found however that it's basically wasted to have more than one of the current 'hot' games in a multi game machine and the normal set up of a such a machine would see one of the best current games installed with the remaining holes being filled with older games.



The configuration is something that the location will decide for you, many locations with mixed type of player base do much better with a multi game system, while others are clearly suited best by single game machines running the latest games.

The other thing to be aware of with Neo Geo is the capability of a lot of the games to take real good money on a return trip, some of the older games which did suffer a bit from short site life can go back to a location, three, six or twelve months later and take top money for at least a few weeks. Used this way rather than trading them in, the older games can comfortably earn a couple of hundred dollars more than you'd ever get as a trade in price.

Neo Geo is a great product, particularly for street operators and the good part is that with over 30 outside game making companies now developing games for the system .....it can only get better







## ARCADE PIECE

### Ace Driver De Luxe

It was very difficult not to have some reservations about Namco's *Ace Driver De Luxe* when it was released in September at the AM Show in Tokyo, even though it was obviously a piece of quality equipment.

The price mentioned was enough to make people start looking for excuses not to buy it, and the same happened at AMOA Expo, but high prices for quality games is something we're all going to have to get used to, they're here to stay, and that makes it more important today than ever before that operators look past the price and buy for ROI (return on investment)

*Ace Driver*, particularly the De Luxe model is not a machine for every arcade by any means, but it is a machine that will provide a great ROI, in high volume arcades and other quality locations.

The game is F1 driving at it's very best and the brilliant cabinet with the swinging simulator seats is the best twin screen cabinet yet made.

The texture mapped graphics are superb, providing a realism that can only make you wonder what Virtual Reality can do that Namco can't already do with polygons.

The players control of the cars is also superb, we thought the previous Namco game, *Ridge Racer* was the ultimate in this regard, but somehow the company engineers have made handling of the F1's even better again, and the whole package is backed up with big Bose speakers that envelop the player in all the sounds of a Grand Prix race track.

*Ace Driver* is a machine of rare quality, and if it performs like we believe it will, the price will be of secondary importance, we see this game not only earning big, big dollars for a long time, but acting as a magnet in drawing people into the select locations that it's placed in.



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## REDEMPTION GAME

### SkeeBall Lightning

Skee-Ball Inc have taken the roll up game of Skee Ball by the throat and shaken the daylights out of it with their new model, *SkeeBall Lightning* and we expect it to be one of the best new products of this type, released for some time.

Though it's retained it's popularity for many years, Skee Ball as a game has still needed to be brought up a notch to compete on a level footing with the technology and glitz of the 90's, and *Skee Ball Lightning* does just that.

The game has a host of new features including tricolour Dot Matrix display which adds graphics and

messaging to the game play, special black lighting of a fluorescent target board, "Double Flash" an optional play feature which enables players to pick up double points in set circumstances, and a whole lot more that are all designed to keep the player at the game.

Sound and lighting effects are superb and blend in brilliantly with the game play and the stylish decor of the game to complete a great package.

You'll go a long way to see a better update of a game than what's on view with *Skee Ball Lightning* and players must like it too as testing has shown that it is capable of earnings well in excess of conventional models.

Ideal multi piece for arcades, FEC's and any large location with mixed clientele as it attracts players of all ages and either sex.

*SkeeBall Lightning* may never be the star attraction, but it will earn solidly and consistently for many years.



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## FEC ATTRACTION

# Shooting For FEC Profits

With all the brilliant new technology at work in this industry it's a cause of some amazement that most good games and attractions stem from age old concepts.

Pan Amusements Shooting Galleries from the UK are such a beast, though they employ the latest technologies, the concept is as old as Mathuzla, and the games just keep on earning.

The company has been manufacturing Shooting Galleries for 15 years and to the best of their knowledge every gallery they have made is still working and earning money. Those galleries, some now 15 years old were built to the best possible standards of the day, but natural manufacturing evolution and development dictates that the products Pan are building today are far superior.

So what sort of life are we looking at for the Pan Shooting Galleries being built now, 30 years? 50 years? It's quite feasible, and that would have to provide the sort of ROI that gets Bank managers and accountants dancing in the streets, as most galleries pay for themselves inside a year.

I get a kick out of watching people in arcades and fun centres, particularly around the shooting gallery. The dad in a family group will invariably try to edge the group over to the shooting gallery without being too obvious.

When junior finally sights it and drags the family over for a go, dad "reluctantly" agrees, drops the coins and goes through all the motions of teaching the little guy how to aim and shoot.

You see, some 99% of dads consider they are crack shots with a rifle, they love to show off their prowess to their kids and wives, and though the majority are basically hopeless, dad will always walk away from a Shooting Gallery, a winner.

The carrying on by sections of the public about guns, slowed a lot of shooting galleries down for a while, but Pan's water spray, a fun system where the player can get a light shower from the target when he misses, took any hint of gun violence away from their products.

Who could look at kids and adults playing a target shooting game as anything but good, old fashioned fun when the target stands up, tells the player it was a crook shot and then sprays him with water amidst howls of laughter from all concerned.

Pan Shooting Galleries are fully electronic, they do not need an attendant and can be built to any size or be adapted to any unusual shape in available floor space.

Age old favourites they may be, but the Pan Shooting Galleries are as up to date technologically as any amusement



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attraction on the market today. They are just as attractive to players now as they have always been and represent a solid and secure investment for any type of entertainment location that caters to the family.

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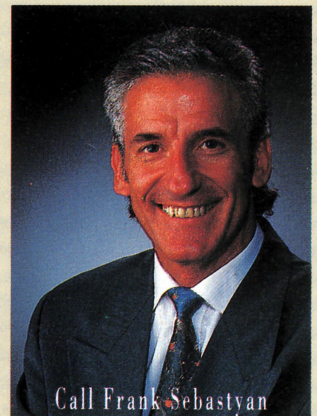
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# COASTAL AMUSEMENTS INC

**STRONG TEAM AT COASTAL KEEP BRINGING ON THE GOOD GAMES**

The successful partnership between Coastal Amusements Inc. owners, Lenny Dean and Sal Mirando, have produced yet another fine example of why the name Coastal Amusements is synonymous with quality redemption products.

Their latest release, *Fred Flinstone's Memory Match*, is bound to be another winner. Licensed from Hanna-Barbera, it is a concentration/memory type game which features "Fred" with his family and friends in a concept that is sure to have huge appeal.

The Lakewood, New Jersey based firm is a company that in recent years has received two first-place awards, as well as an honourable mention, from the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) for having the Most Outstanding Exhibit Display for Coin-op Redemption Games.

Several years ago, Sal and Lenny decided to combine their talents to design and manufacture a complete line of quality redemption games. This partnership has proven to be extremely successful - you only have to look at the many Coastal games appearing at the top of most equipment popularity charts.

With a growing product line spanning the range

from adult to children's games, Coastal has expanded its production space by more than double to accommodate the market demand for its products.

Coastal's personnel are dedicated to producing the finest games available on the market and to helping operators get the most out of redemption. Robert Keelyn, a sales representative has been with the company since its inception and Joe Tunney, an operating veteran of many years, joins Bob in forming a forceful sales team. Bob and Joe travel the country in support of distribution and conduct teaching seminars to bring redemption to the frontline of the coin-op industry.

Coastal is proud of its employee dedication developed over the years and encourages a total team effort. The long and painstaking task of product development is handled with care by Dan Bennett, Alan Kalb and Keith Eaton.

While the company designs its products to require minimum service, the technical service department is only a phone call away. The experienced people in this department include Merideth Trimel, Jim Hughes, Jeff Fisher, and Rich Jackson.

Plant management is supervised by Joe Linglebach whose motto is "No problem, we can handle it!" Customer service is under the direction of Angela Henke, purchasing and inventory control are shared by Peggy Harries and Jan Orrok. Complementing the various departments is a capable office staff managed by Amy Meyer-Swindell with assistance from Julia Campfield, Jenny Shaw and Christina Albino, the "voice" of Coastal.

What is Coastal's secret to success? If you ask Lenny or Sal, they will immediately answer, "There is no secret. There is only hard work, resulting in a solid business - but a little bit of luck doesn't hurt either."

Coastal believes their products are a "combination of what has been appealing in the past, with a new twist or turn that appeals to all ages, and maybe just a little magic."

And magic is what Coastal has plenty of for the future of our industry.

Coastal Amusements products will be on display at the ATEI Exhibition in London this month, as well as the ACME Exhibition in Reno, Nevada in March.

For more information contact your local distributor. For a referral or a product directory, contact Coastal's sales team on: Phone +1 (908) 905 6662 or Fax +1 (908) 905 6815.





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# ROCK-OLA®



## 1935 – 1995



# 60 Years of Music

*The Rock-Ola Manufacturing Corporation celebrates its 60th year in the Jukebox manufacturing industry this year. It's two years since the death of company founder, David Rockola, but wherever he is at this point of time, he has good reason to be very proud of what he achieved.*

If you had a kid of 14 who told you today that he was leaving school and going out to make his fortune, you'd probably give him a clip under the ear, tell him to stop romancing and get back into the homework, but when David Rockola decided to do just that in 1911, he went out into the world and did it.

Along the way he created a company that was to have products that carried his name, operating in every corner of the world, products that would write the name "Rock-Ola" indelibly in the history of the coin operated music industry.

David Rockola, of course didn't know any of this at the time,

he worked for a few years doing anything he could and without any real direction, but he still managed to own his own food processing and cooler manufacturing business by the time he was 20.

By this time he'd attained considerable interest in the coin operated machine industry and after tiring of the food processing, took a position with a leading coin-op manufacturer, then in 1924, still only 27 years old, Rockola became a distributor of vending machines and scales. Whilst earning a dollar at distributing he invented and patented a new scales mechanism which saw him establish the Rock-Ola Scale

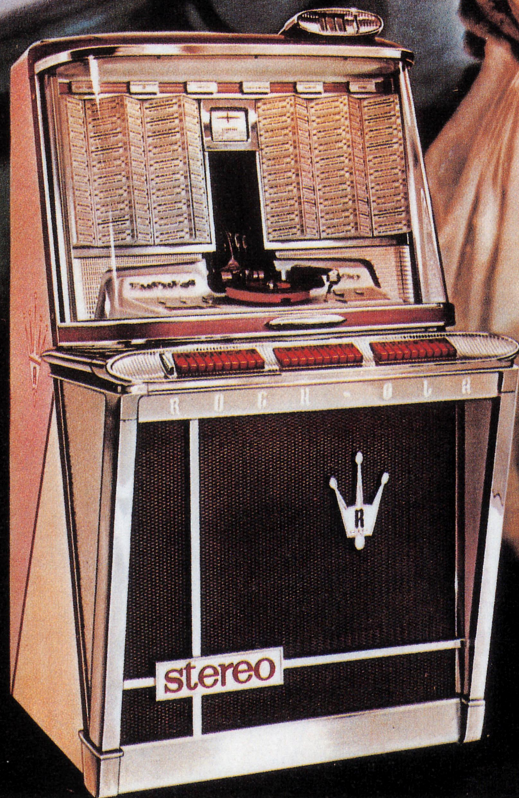


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**ROCK-OLA®**



1935 - 1995



Co. in 1927 and it was through this company that the move to Jukeboxes was made.

The always astute Rockola bought up a stack of patents from the John Gabel Co, one of the earliest manufacturers of coin operated phonographs, and set about going into production of Rock-Ola Jukeboxes.

Even at that early stage of his career, the young tyro was respected in manufacturing as was shown when Homer Capehart, the driving force behind Wurlitzer, flew to Chicago to try and talk him out of starting in Jukeboxes, saying that there was only room for one major company and Rockola would do his money. (bear in mind that in those early days of commercial aviation, businessmen didn't fly anywhere unless they were desperate or tired of living)

Capehart's trip however, only served to convince Rockola that he was onto something good and he immediately started work on the new project. The first Rock-Ola jukeboxes were completed in 1934 and put into locations. As can be seen in the box at bottom of page, in January 1935, David Rockola was ready to announce the production of Jukeboxes for sale to the coin-op industry.

*He'd created what was to become a legend*

Though it would have been much more difficult for David Rockola to do today what he did in the 20's and 30's, it must be remembered that he did it without any formal education in engineering, manufacturing or business management and always had the full respect of his peers.

Many consider that Rockola's greatest assets were his basic common sense and his acute business sense. He was to demonstrate both to the Jukebox industry a very short time after entering it.

Realizing that as a comparative latecomer to Jukebox manufacture he had a bit of catching up to do, Rockola didn't try to out do the longer established manufacturers in innovation.

Where others concentrated on technology and ascetics he was content to work on refining existing technologies, building in reliability, and good old fashioned marketing. His experience in coin-op scales, pintables and novelty games told him this was the way to go and it proved dead right when his methods catapulted the Rock-Ola brand to the forefront of the coin operated music industry in 1936, and except for a brief lull in the late 80's, prior to it being sold to Glenn Streeter's AA, the company has stayed there.

There's a myriad of stories that can be told about David Rockola and his early days in the Jukebox industry like the time he turned a single order for a single machine into the means to market 100's of machines.

## The Birth of a Legend

### ROCK-OLA ENTERS PHONO FIELD

with 12 PLAY "MULTI-SELECTOR"

Features Simple, Silent, No-Jam Mechanical Changer Mechanism and 2 Ounce Pick-Up

**CHICAGO, January 1935....**  
Rock-Ola Manufacturing Corporation today announced their introduction into the coin operated phonograph business with a 12 selection automatic phonograph to be known as the Rock-Ola Multi-Selector.

Designed by one of America's leading industrial designers, the cabinet reflects beauty and a sweeping, graceful decor. Rock-Ola Multi-Selector features rich grained Walnut veneers and inlaid French Striped Rosewood.

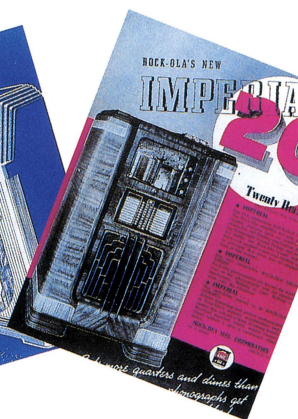
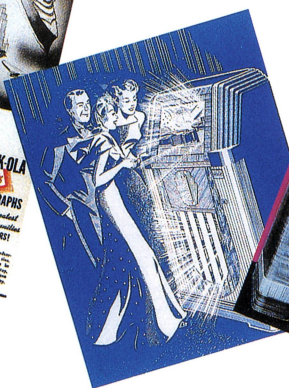
It's multi coin shute accepts five and ten cent coins, playing one record for each five cents played. It's record chamber holds 12 records, easily accessible through the front door.

Rock-Ola advises that through an exclusive design, they have been able to reduce the weight of the pick-up to 2 ounces, (half the customary weight) It is felt that this will do away with costly record replacement due to scratched and damaged records.

The new unit is reported to be the first automatic phonograph to offer an isolated tone chamber.....tone diffuser.... full wave crystal pick-up.....high fidelity amplifier.....new types of tubes and a super power, high fidelity speaker.

The unit is in production now, and the company is accepting orders. It is estimated that shipments will start within 30 days.





It goes like this;

In 1936 David scored a major coup in providing a Rock-Ola *Multi Selector* Jukebox to the new Cunard

luxury liner, the *Queen Mary*. The company word was that Cunard ordered it, but it's a good bet that Rockola gave it to them (possibly even paid them to take it)

Whatever the case, he had to deliver it on short notice as the ship was due to sail. Quick to seize any opportunity, he organised the Jukebox to be raced through New York on the back of a taxi cab, a police escort and a Rock-Ola employed, squad of private detectives cleared the way through the huge crowds that had gathered to see the liner off and the Rock-Ola Jukebox was hoisted aboard just as it was about to leave.

Every newspaper of any note carried the story, most with pictures of the Jukebox being loaded or on the back of the cab and at the end of the day, 'Rock-Ola Jukebox' was a household phrase.

Rock-Ola went on to build a very successful advertising campaign responsible for 100's of sales around that "sale" to the *Queen Mary*, with slogans like ".....and the *Queen* shall have music wherever she goes"

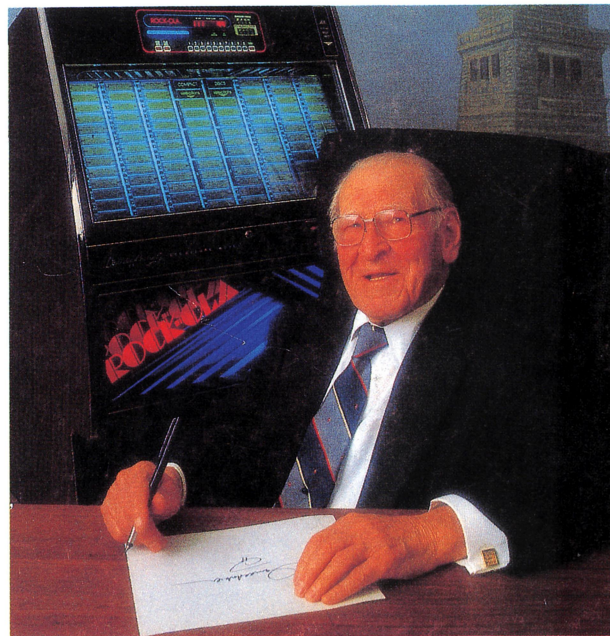
Unashamedly milking the *Queen Mary* episode to the full, the company even manufactured a Pintable titled *Queen Mary* which met with reasonable success, but not enough to entice Rockola into switching more of his resources over to Pinballs.

The company did open a vending machine division later on and dabbled in other areas, but the Jukebox always remained the main line.

In 1992 the company was still in the Rockola family's hands, but with David's (then 95) health failing and the company in danger of losing it's direction, the Rock-Ola Jukebox division was sold to Glenn Streeter's Antique Apparatus Co and moved to California.

It's fitting that Glenn Streeter will now take the Rock-Ola name into the next millennium, he started in a garage himself, and he has great respect for the

**Cash Box International January, 1995**



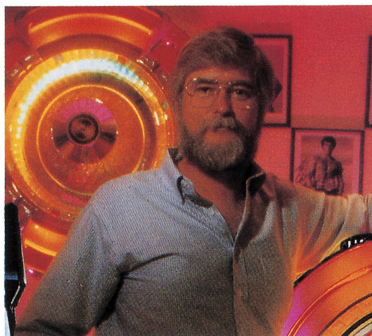
Rock-Ola heritage he has inherited, and the late David Rockola as a person.

With the release of the *Rocket* range, the magnificent *Legend* and the *Bubbler*, the Rock-Ola Manufacturing Co is now back in it's rightful place with the leaders in Jukebox manufacture and we'd be very surprised if Streeter doesn't have a special anniversary model Rock-Ola up his sleeve to celebrate the 60th year of the great brand name.

60 years of manufacture is a fine achievement, Cash Box congratulates all those of the old and new Rock-Ola Co's, who have made it possible.

Above; David C Rockola as he appeared on the cover of *RePlay* in November 1987  
Pic courtesy of RePlay

Left: Glenn Streeter, whose company, Antique Apparatus Co, bought the Rock-Ola Jukebox division in 1992 and below is the current model Rock-Ola CD, 'The Legend'.







# UNITED DISTRIBUTING CO

## *flexibility is the key.*

England's United Distributing Company celebrated its 10th birthday last year and the anniversary marked a solid decade of quiet achievement for the father and son team. Derek and Mark Horwood, both equal partners, established the company in 1984 and it took off almost immediately because they identified a growth market and attacked.

Back then it was quality AWP conversions that operators were screaming out for and, by concentrating on this sector, they experienced great success. Within 18 months UDC had to find bigger premises and subsequently moved to Park Avenue in London's now famous NW10 district.

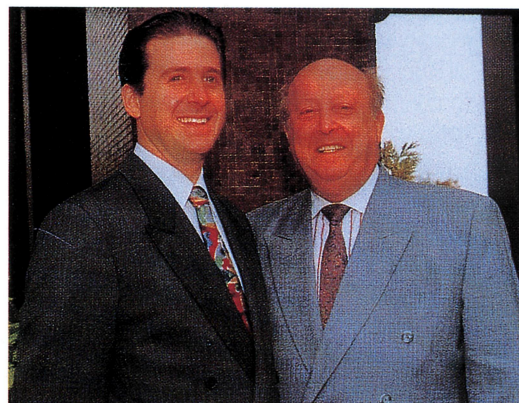
The Horwoods were the first coin-op people to move into Park Avenue which, along with Brent Crescent, forms what is now known as the United Kingdom's "Coin Ma-

chine Village". Other companies on the block include Brent Leisure, Deith Leisure, Electrocoin, Jaleco and Suzo. And each year in June, UDC joins the other factories in throwing open their doors for the NW10 Open Day which has become quite a significant little exhibition.

Unlike some of their larger distributor neighbours, UDC is not tied to any particular manufacturer - and that's the way they like. According to Derek Horwood it gives the company the ability to be a lot more flexible.

*"We're not choked with all the Atari line or all the Sega line," he told AB Europe last year. "We're not constricted. We can duck and dive as the market changes, we're versatile. That's the way we operate."*

These days United Distributing Company is still into AWP machine conversions and they handle products from JPM, Barcrest, Ace, Project Coin and BFM. They also custom build machines for foreign markets, taking note of the special requirements of a particular country. UK AWP machines are converted for markets in the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Russia, Hungary, Greece, France, Latvia, Romania and more...



*Above right:  
Mark and Derek  
Horwood*

*Below: One of  
UDC's  
successful  
imports last  
year, a table top  
air hockey game  
called  
"Caramball"*



However, in the years since 1984, UDC have also branched out into other types of amusement equipment, including pinball, video, air hockey and table football. An relatively new piece which did well for them last year was the "Caramball" table-top air hockey game but they also deal in all the major lines - from Sega to Namco, Williams/Bally, Midway, Jaleco and Taito to Premier Technology.

It may sound like an awful lot of product but, being an untied distributor, UDC chooses its games and machines carefully. They can react quickly to market changes and when a particular game or equipment is hot, UDC will quickly pick it up. It's the way they've always operated and probably the secret to their success.

The company has long been involved in the supply of second-hand simulator style games, a niche they pin pointed within the general video market.





Providing good quality, second-hand simulators is one of the things that UDC is known for and they refurbish all the machines in-house.

Another area in which the Horwoods were quick to identify a growth market was pinball. They predicted the UK's pinball boom before it started and positioned themselves for some very healthy sales. Now things have slowed down a bit they are doing some good business selling second-hand pinballs to foreign markets.

Derek has been in the industry for 35 years and his son for 15 years and it's obvious that experience has helped their company immensely.

By watching the market closely UDC has been able to keep up to date with and take advantage of various market developments. So far this high level of flexibility has worked and UDC has continued to grow in size.

The company's Park Avenue location is made up of two buildings and totals over 23,000 sq. ft in area, one

building is devoted solely to back-up and technical support on all video games and redemption machines, while the other concentrates on pay-out machines and pinball.

As well as a dedicated spare parts department, there is a full diagnostic workshop complete with test rigs for Bally/Williams pins, Barcrest, BFM, JPM and Ace MPUs and TV monitor boards.

The one thing that UDC really pride themselves on is refurbishing and servicing second hand machines so they appear as new as possible. And it's not just UK customers that are appreciating this bit of extra effort - export sales have increased solidly in recent years and now account for around 23% of the company's total sales.

"Yes, all in all the first ten years have been both hectic and enjoyable," says Derek Horwood. "The next ten years promise to be even more so."

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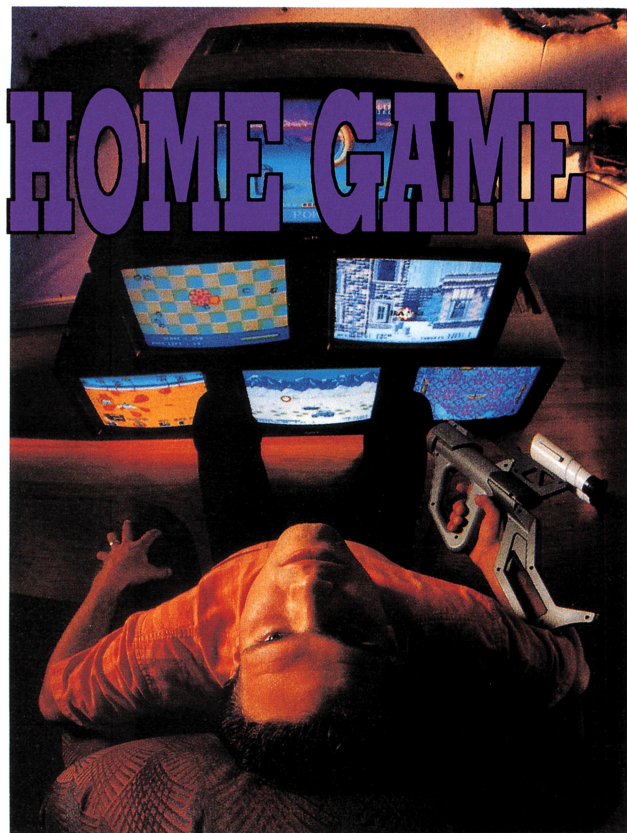
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# SHAKEOUT

Hard-pressed home video game manufacturers are facing an even more difficult 1995. After drastic revisions in their income forecasts for the current financial year, both Sega and Nintendo will also have to compete for their dominant market positions.

Japan's consumer electronics firms are getting in on the action - Matsushita released its 3DO system last year and Sony, NEC, JVC and Sanyo are all set to follow suit. And then there's Atari, trying to make a comeback.

This all happening against a backdrop of falling profits for the two big guns. In the year to March, Nintendo's pre-tax profit fell by 45% and another fall of 25% is predicted over the present financial year. Sega is also doing badly: its first-half profits fell by almost 43% and the company's sales are down 25%. Both domestic and foreign sales are falling and it has been estimated that Sega and Nintendo each have unsold foreign inventories worth ¥50 billion.

So far the battle has been fought with increasingly powerful machines. Nintendo made its name with the so-called 8-bit machine, Sega came out on top when it introduced its 16-bit system and all the new challengers have 32-bit systems.

Sega has responded with its own 32-bit machine, the Saturn, but Nintendo is sticking with its 16-bit system for the moment. Last November Nintendo announced

headset by the end of '95, although there is talk that 3DO is also 64-bit bound. Nintendo hopes its Ultra 64 will be cheap enough to walk all over its 32-bit rivals.

Of course the most powerful system in the world will not be a success if it doesn't have good software to go with it. And this is where Sega and Nintendo have the advantage.

These two companies have built their empires by controlling the production of the cartridges (and now, compact discs) that fit into their games machines, even when the games themselves are designed by independent software houses. This lets them sell their machines cheaply but to charge large royalties on the cartridges. Nintendo, for example, makes around 80% of its profit on software sales.

Many software houses are unwilling to spend the time and money to develop a game unless they can be sure of selling a substantial amount of units. While there is no doubt that the 3DO Real is a more sophisticated machine, its American sales amounted to only a disappointing 50,000 units. This is because the system is suffering from a shortage of good games.

Sony's PlayStation is coming out with only 23 titles to back it up, and NEC's PC-FX has fewer than 20. By contrast, in the last financial year 130 new, independently designed games were launched for Sega's 16-bit Genesis (or Mega Drive) machine.

details of Virtual Boy, a 32-bit device virtual reality capabilities, which it hopes to release in several months. However reports are that the prototype is less than impressive.

An ace up Sony's sleeve is having Namco, one of the all time great game makers, developing games for their system and the brilliant Ridge Racer is already converted and will be available with the first Play Stations shipped.

With all the new systems coming out, it will be a true battle for market share. Not only will they have to compete with each other, they will have to convince current game machine owners to update. This shake down of the industry has made some question whether the future of home video games even lies with a hardware/cartridge system.

It's possible that the 32-bit and 64-bit machines presently being developed will be the last hurrah of the stand-alone games machine. When you think about it, these games machines are just computers, but computers that have been designed to do only one thing.

Around 30% of American homes contain a personal computer, which means they have a similar level of penetration as games machines. A recent survey showed that 71% of Americans use their PCs for entertainment and it has been estimated that next year's PC game sales will reach US\$2.8 billion. This is beginning to approach the US\$3.6 billion that will be spent on traditional video games.

The shift from stand-alone machines to game-playing PCs could eventually destroy Sega and Nintendo's monopoly on games systems hardware, especially if games are fed to them along fibre or from satellite.

Sega and Nintendo obviously take this possibility seriously. Nintendo has purchased a failing Japanese satellite company to service the 8 million Japanese households with satellite dishes. Sega, on the other hand, is concentrating on cable television and have already tested their Sega Channel in America.

Whatever the outcome, the home video market is in for an interesting but bumpy ride over the next few years. Who will be left standing at the end, and how it will subsequently affect the coin-op industry, remains to be seen.





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# AUSI VR '94

*Australia's first Virtual Reality Conference opened up a lot of good discussion on the subject and attendees were able to get a much better idea of where Virtual Reality was heading. The Conference will become an annual event.*

AUSI VR '94, Australia's first international virtual reality conference was held at the World Congress Centre in Melbourne late last year. Hosted by Integra Australia, the conference and exhibition aimed to "demystify" virtual reality and indicate the uses for VR in all areas of industry, including medicine, design, architecture, defence, computing and, of course, entertainment.

As a VR company, conference hosts and sponsors, Integra Australia, saw the need to promote virtual reality in Australia.

"As the host of the conference we wanted to establish VR as a viable and credible tool for a large number of industries," said Integra's Alan Yates. "Australia is a little behind countries like America and Japan in the development and acceptance of virtual reality, mainly because of our small population."

"It's a very new thing and that's what the conference was about, we wanted to wake people up to the opportunities provided by virtual reality."

Integra haven't tapped into the entertainment sector as yet but have plans to do so in the near future. They distribute a wide range of VR products

from various companies and until recently, one of these distributor agreements stopped them from pursuing VR systems for the amusement industry.

This situation has now changed and as Integra have been doing extensive R&D into virtual reality applications anyway, they will also be looking into developing machines for amusement purposes.

Conference organisers, Impulse Promotions, estimated that around 40% of the exhibits at AUSI '94 were in some way in-

volved with the entertainment sector, although there were only a few products aimed directly at amusement centres.

Virtual Reality Corporation were there with their Virtuality machines and it was the first Australian showing of the Series 2000 sit down version. They also had Buggy Ball on display, a new game for the 2000 SD which is still under development.

Buggy ball is probably best described as cross between a dodgem car and a giant beach ball in a virtual world!

Martin Blackmore from Virtual Reality Corp describes the gameplay in more detail: "Imagine you are driving in a virtual environment with up to three other players also in cars. The vehicles are like beach buggies and you're driving in an oval, banked track and there's a giant beach ball which you get points for knocking out of the track."

"At the same time you can run into other vehicles and they'll tip over or tip you over. The sound effects are great and there are two different viewpoints like in Virtua Racing."

The game should be ready sometime this month and, according to Martin, was well received at the conference.

Virtual World Creations, a company associated with Virtual Reality Corp, also had an interesting product on display called Virtual Guitar. It's a multimedia game, using a replica guitar which plugs into the back of an IBM computer, and a CD ROM.

There are songs to play and interactive scenes where crowds will boo you if you play badly. The band and audience scenes are all real time video. Difficulty levels range from beginner to virtuoso so everyone can have a go.

On the beginners lever there is a graph at the bottom of the screen which marks the chord changes and the player only has to strum the guitar at the correct time as the actual chords have been pre-programmed. Distortion, feedback and other effects can be added and as the player gets better, they can move up to the lead or stunt levels and actually play the notes of the music.

"The game starts with a bedroom scene," explains Martin Blackmore. "There's a knock on the door and a kid comes in and says he's heard you playing outside and would you play a song for him?"





*"If you make the grade, he invites you to jam with their garage band. If you do any good in that scene, you're discovered by a sleazy agent and you get a gig in a club, and so on..."*

Virtual Guitar is really aimed at the retail market and the guitar will be available for Christmas this year for \$299. However, Martin believes they will be producing a version of the game for LBEs and it is currently running at Disney's EPCOT Centre in Florida.

This is where Disney previews a lot of new technology, including their new Alladin virtual reality game/ride where players take a ride on Alladin's magic carpet and control it by moving two bits of material which represent the two front corners of the carpet.

*"I think Virtual Guitar will also do well as a promotional tool in night clubs and pubs - 'guitar-oke' if you like. It's a lot of fun,"* says Martin.

A company who are developing a product specifically for arcades is Melbourne-based HITek Cybernetics. They had a developmental model on display at AUSI '94 and the final version should be released soon.

It's a racing simulator/VR game where players are seated in a proper driving cabinet with steering wheel, accelerator etc and wear a head mounted display. The machine has been entirely developed in Australia and it is HITek Cybernetic's first major product after two year's research.

Some of the features of the system include stereoscopic vision (which gives depth to the graphics so they appear three dimensional) and vectored, distance graded sound. This means the sound effects are louder or softer depending on whether an ear is facing the source and diminish with distance so players can place objects around them by ear.

Realism of the sound effects is also increased by the doppler effect. Sounds of objects increase in frequency when moving towards the player and decrease in frequency when moving away just as they do in real life.

Control of the accelerator, brake and steering are all scaled to give players greater sensitivity and control over their vehicles and HITek Cybernetic's optical system allows a small degree of peripheral vision. The company also claims their head motion tracking system is faster than any other on the market.

The exact capabilities of the finished product are still being kept under wraps and George Iliades from HITek Cybernetics stressed that the model on display at AUSI '94 didn't really give a good idea of what their final machine will be capable of.

The company also plans to release a new game every three months and are by no means limiting themselves to driving games. In the long term, this will mean there will be three or four different cabinet types available.

Once their system hits the market, the guys from HITek Cybernetics are confident that the public will take to it in a big way.

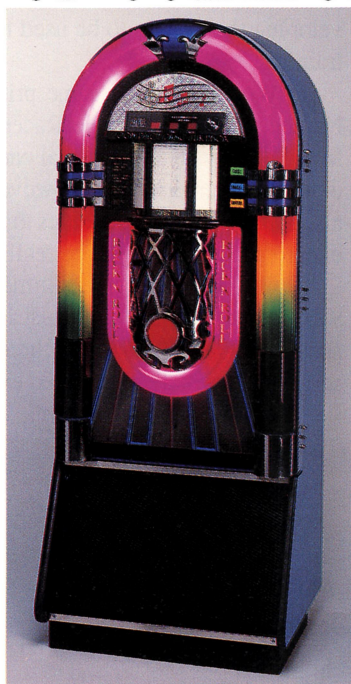
Says George Iliades: *"If you came to a bridge in one of the games and looked up, it really does feel like you are looking up into a bridge. With the full stereoscopic and vectored sound, proper motion tracking, it will be a completely*

*different feeling of disembodiment - that's what we're trying to do."*

Next year the machines will be available to buy, rent (at \$350 per day) or profit share. In the case of profit sharing, HITek Cybernetics provide and service the machine for 60% of the take while the amusement centre or FEC owner provides the location and receives 40% of the earnings.

Another Australian produced item at AUSI '94 was "The Bird", a virtual joystick developed by Sydney company VIR Systems. The Bird had its world premiere at the VR conference and while it is currently being targeted for the con-

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# AUSI VR '94

of the technology on display definitely had entertainment potential. There were a couple of computer graphics simulator rides, including one themed on the Robo Cop movies.

sumer market, the company assures us that a coin-op version will be available soon.

The joystick is chordless and has no base. It has a pistol grip which sits comfortably in the player's hand, letting him control the video game with a lot more freedom than is offered by a normal joystick.

VIR Systems have developed what they call Attitude Sensing Technology which senses all the movements the player makes. As you react to the game, The Bird captures the attitudes you adopt and the game character moves accordingly.

With The Bird it is actually possible, although probably not practical, to play the game from anywhere in the room, thanks to the special non-directional, infra-red tracking system. It doesn't require alignment or line of sight and has a very wide angle infra-red transmission.

The Bird was ergonomically designed to eliminate the muscle strain which can be caused by existing joysticks and it can be used in either hand. VIR Systems have patents pending on their product and say The Bird's Attitude Sensing Technology is highly adaptable to other platforms, applications and designs.

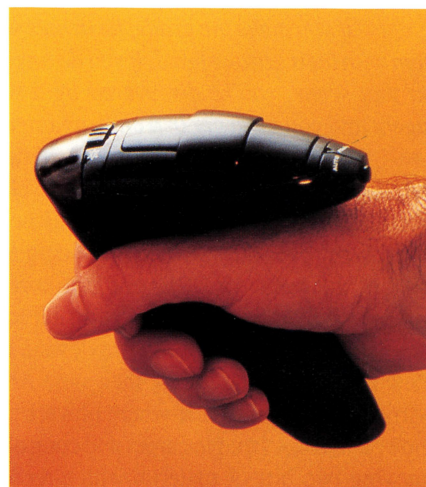
While there were not that many products *targeting* the coin-op industry, some

A joint venture between Evans & Sutherland, Sense 8 and Sun Microsystems has produced an interesting VR experience called Midnight Manor. It's a "virtual" walk through of a haunted house where you have work your way through the mansion by opening doors and walking up stairs and corridors. Axes, ghosts and other spooky things fly at you and the immersive quality of the experience is enhanced by a head mounted display and sound effects.

Another machine which could have entertainment applications is the impressive driving simulator developed by In-Mar-Tech for the Victorian Transport Accident Commission. The Victorian government spent \$2.5 million dollars in developing the system to be used for driver training.

Working on the same principal as Namco's full scale Ridge Racer, the In-Mar-Tech system uses a real car. Instead of just a big screen in front however, the car also has screens on both sides to make the experience of driving more realistic.

Of course, the entertainment sector was only one of many industries represented at AUSI '94 and the three days of seminar presentations covered every con-



"The Bird" from VIR Systems uses "Attitude Sensing Technology"

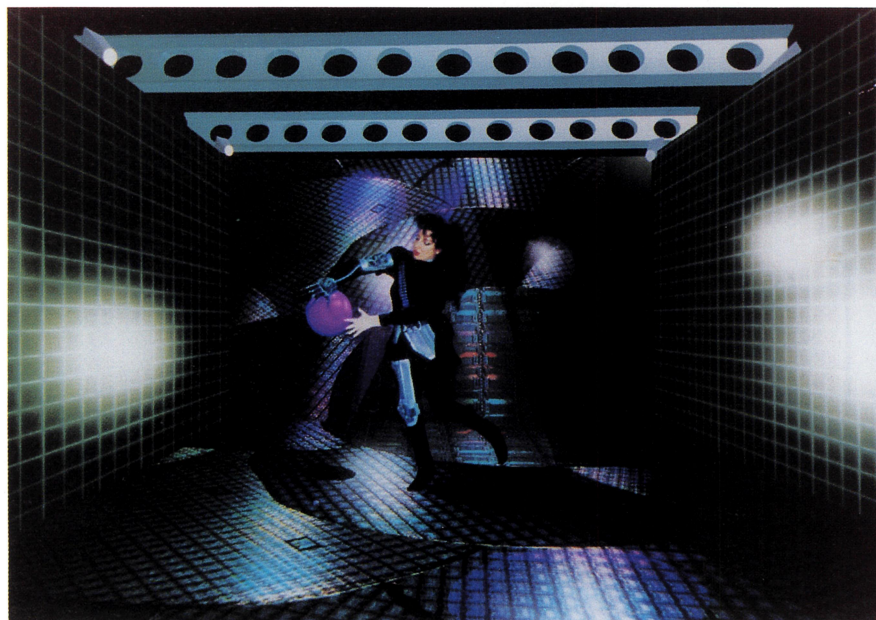
ceivable virtual reality angle. Papers were given on dentistry, architecture, medicine, building and project design as well as a whole host of technical and ethical issues. All attendees and exhibitors agreed that the speakers at AUSI VR '94 were of the highest calibre, making it a very impressive seminar program.

One of the most interesting exhibits was a virtual reality theatre project called "Sorcery in Cyberspace". Performed and produced by Julie Martin, a multi media artistic director and producer, the performance involves the live manipulation of virtual objects. Three dimensional computer graphics are controlled by the movement of the body.

Sorcery in Cyberspace is currently being funded by the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council (a government funded body). And promoting virtual reality as an artistic endeavour was one of the main objectives of AUSI VR '94.

The conference chairman, Dr Walter Greenleaf, said: *"Funding must be provided for Australian VR companies to develop export markets and to spread the message that virtual reality is a creative industry offering major benefits to the arts, including entertainment graphics, exhibition design, set design architecture, theatre, music, film and so forth."*

He believes VR will be a multi-million dollar industry for Australia, just as it is in the United States. And one product which many at the exhibition felt had great export potential was a 3D radiography tool which enables doctors to show their patients *exactly* what is wrong with them.



Julie Martin of Electronic Theatre on "Virtua Stage" which allows live manipulation of virtual objects, story board and test image in live interaction with LCD Data projection.



COIN  
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# Virtual Reality

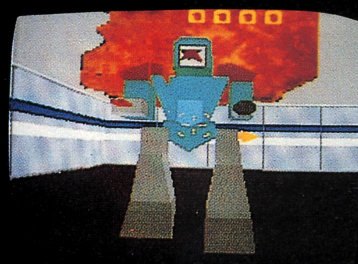
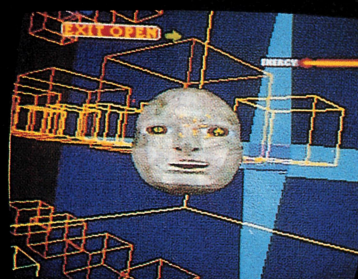
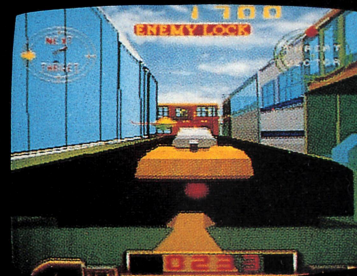
## DEFCON EXTREME

### SCENARIO

Computer controlled military plant has been taken over by artificial intelligence within the computer system

### THE MISSION

Regain control of the computer system using virtual reality controlled tank, helicopter and robot



Applied VR Pty Ltd

ACN 065 098 071

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Victoria Australia

Phone: +613 729 9900

Fax: +613 720 4415



# AUSI VR '94

Sandy Clark felt that this particular piece of equipment created the most interest but she said there was no *one* show stopper. This was because of the varied nature of the exhibition and each delegate came specifically for the displays in their particular industry.

Trade delegations were invited from relevant industries and the exhibitors themselves gave the conference organisers lists of potential customers.

"Each exhibitor invited 20 to 40 trade delegates each," said Sandy Clark. "In addition, we selected some of the larger companies like Optus, Telecom and BHP who brought through quite big numbers of people."

"As a result, I wouldn't say there was any one 'crowd pleaser'. Most of the stands were well attended because delegates had specialist interests."

The relatively small number of visitors attending AUSI VR '94 was a bit disappointing for most exhibitors but they still considered it a worthwhile experience.

"The conference was very interesting although not many people turned up," said George Iliades from HITek Cybernetics. "I still think it will be worth our time to attend again next year and I am sure it will be better next year."

Virtual Reality Corp's Martin Blackmore agreed: "We were a little disappointed in the lack of delegates but we weren't disappointed in the public participation. There is a big awareness of VR and our view is that as a first-up conference, it was good."

While Martin said the conference resulted in quite a bit of business for his company's financial software programs, he still feels that a virtual reality conference is a strange concept.

"VR is one of those things that I don't think should stand on its own. It's part of the general graphics industry, or the computer industry, or part of the entertainment industry..."

According to Sandy Clark, AUSI VR '94 was a "quality, not quantity" event.

"It's very early days for virtual reality," she explained. "I think overall exhibi-

tors would have liked more potential buyers but we had to start somewhere and the whole event was very professional, it was a very good start."

As the sponsors of the event, Integra Australia were pleased with AUSI VR '94 and have committed themselves to a similar conference in 1995. At this stage, no dates or venues have been released but most of the exhibitors spoken to said they would be there.

"Since the conference we have received a lot of phone calls and letters from speakers and exhibitors who all raved about it," said Integra's Alan Yates.

"Most people are unaware of the many applications VR has and the conference gave developers in different areas of VR an opportunity to both learn and inform. Once we connect with the super highway, VR is going to really take off because people will be using interactive, 3D multimedia systems and networks. They will be communicating in a cyber space."

"I think the conference and the resulting media coverage of it went some way to introducing people to some of these concepts. I certainly believe it was successful, we achieved everything we wanted to in this, the first year, and we expect rapid growth over the next few years."

## DEFCON EXTREME READY FOR COIN-OP MARKET

After three years of development, the Australian designed and manufactured Virtual Reality game *Defcon Extreme* is now ready for operation in the coin-op market.

Applied VR Pty Ltd principals, Jeff and Keith Kershaw who have operated amusement machines for over 17 years are confident that in *Defcon Extreme*, they have produced a VR game of

enormous earning potential and one that will also serve as a major attraction for arcades and similar type locations.

The game was first shown at Queensland's Convention '94 in November and impressed local operators with its operator designed simplicity and player comfort. Those who hadn't previously had any experience of VR games and were expecting visuals in the

headset of Daytona like quality were critical of the graphics, but soon came to understand that VR is a very different species of entertainment to a video game.

*Defcon Extreme* is a basic 'search and destroy' war game that provides a good introduction to VR, but with the system now operating as the Kershaw brothers envisaged it, the emphasis is all on software and the company are currently working on several new games that they believe will bring Virtual Reality to the next level.

The game units are quite reasonably priced on both VR and coin-op machine standards and the makers feel sure the price will get even better as they move into larger scale production and further develop their manufacturing facility.





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# VIRTUAL REALITY

## .....One Company's Experience

Edison Bros, the \$1.5 billion retailer who entered the amusement industry several years ago, have been one of the leading operators of virtual reality. Being in the enviable financial position of "money's no obstacle", they embarked on what can only be described as a VR experiment.

Edison Bros approached the amusement industry in exactly same way they handled their successful retail business. In fact Edison chairman, Andy Newman, is famous for saying that arcades "were just another mall retail space that reflects changing fashions".

While most operators like to be situated in shopping malls because of the good traffic flow, the Edison Bros believe their Exhilirama FECs actually draw customers to the shopping centres.

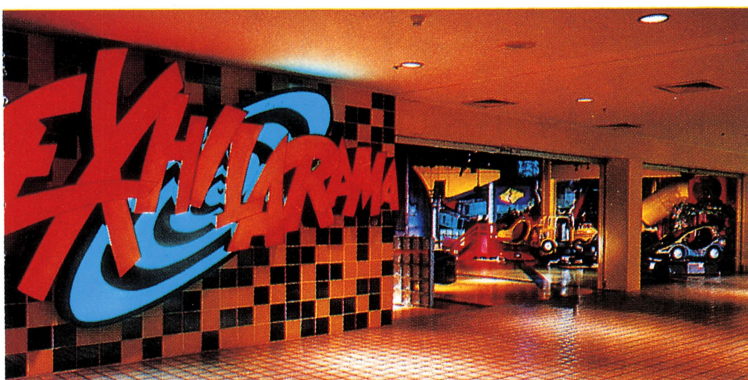
"We had an interest in reinforcing the role of the regional shopping centre as a community destination," Andy Halliday, president of

Edison's mall entertainment division, told RePlay 12 months ago. "That's because our other retail divisions - clothing and footwear - have such an investment in these centres."

Most shopping centres have an "anchor", something to draw shoppers to that particular centre. This is usually a major department store but in the case of the Edison Bros malls, Exhilirama centres are the anchor.

At a time when the FEC concept was relatively new, Edison Bros developed their Exhilirama centres with all the latest machines, rollercoasters and other large rides, dedicated children's play areas, laser tag... and virtual reality.

The centres were presented and



marketed as a brand new concept in family entertainment and VR really became part of the marketing strategy. It was something new and exciting that very few venues had. But as a new technology, untried in the market place, it was also a risky move.

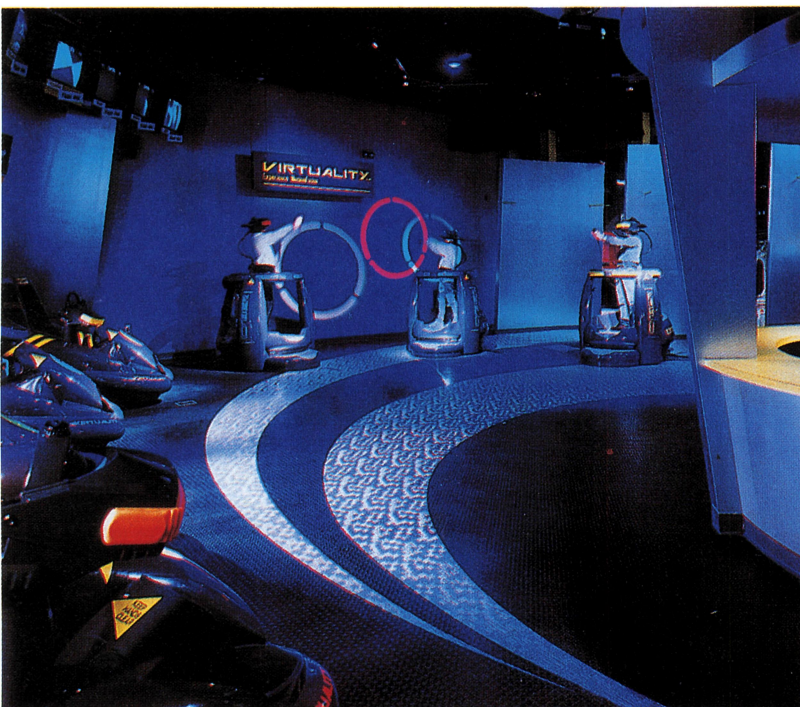
Edison Bros formed a working relationship with England's Virtuality Group (then known as W. Industries) and later became their US distributor for a while. As it turned out, most of the Virtuality units were bought by Edison Bros for their own operation.

Other amusement operators either considered the units too expensive, the technology too new and risky or had qualms about purchasing equipment from a major competitor. And most of these operators would say that they made the right decision.

Four years down the track, Edison Bros have learnt some lessons about VR, which they shared with delegates during a seminar at last year's Fun Expo.

"When I first walked in here, the first few people I saw asked if I was going to talk about the 'doom and gloom' of virtual reality," said Jeff Herman, marketing director for Edison Bros mall entertainment division.

"But I'm not going to do that... In reality, as you probably know, one of the things about virtual reality is the excitement it creates. It's not necessarily how much money it puts into your



Pictured are views of Edison Bros, Exhilirama. At left is the Virtuality area and at top right, the entrance to the very classy entertainment complex

Pics courtesy of RePlay



centre, it's also how much money it brings in to all your other attractions."

Virtual reality was, and still is, an exciting concept that appeals to most people's imaginations. Edison Bros decided to get in on the ground floor to capitalise on this.

Four years ago, commercial VR was almost unheard of and by installing Virtuality units in their centres, Edison Bros were providing a truly unique attraction for their customers.

"You can't judge how much media publicity you get out of VR. We have received just so much coverage in print, radio and television - beyond what we could have imagined. It's money we didn't have to spend in promotion," said Jeff Herman.

But with all the priceless publicity came the problems with operating new technology. There were some minor reliability difficulties and the software library was extremely small because there were not many units out in operation.

During his presentation at Fun Expo, Jeff Herman outlined the performance of a VR machine in an average Edison Bros location. While an excellent centre can earn anywhere from US\$170 to \$220 per day, a typical location only earns about \$100.

However the costs of operating the machine are about \$63 - this includes attendants, depreciation, rent, parts and service and promotional costs.

"Essentially what you end up with is about a \$30 cash profit per day," he said. "The nine month break down is a little over \$8,000. I think most operators look to nine months to get their money back - but were' obviously not talking about Mortal Kombat here. You're not going to get your money back in nine months."

However, in their better locations, the VR machines are earning more, while the operational costs remain almost the same. If a machine can take \$175 per day, the profit after nine months is around \$20,000 - which means it has almost paid for itself.

Perhaps in a few years time, when the prices of VR units come down further, operators will be able to look at virtual reality as just another video game. While in 1991 Edison Bros were paying US\$75,000 for a Virtuality Series 1000, the company's executives hope they will only be paying around the \$20,000 mark for a Series 2000 unit in 1996.

"But keep this in mind," continued Jeff Herman, "it's not just the money that you take in from the virtual reality game itself, it's the extra money you make on all the other attractions when people who wouldn't normally come visit your site."

Edison Bros have conducted their own internal surveys and some of the results are quite interesting. Visitors to Edison Bros locations who didn't play virtual reality spent an average of \$7 to \$9, while people who were using the VR machines were spending over \$20 per visit.

About one third of the visitors at the Exhilarama centres came only to play the VR machines and 43% of the Virtuality players played in groups.

"We have, for example, in our St Louis location a group of ten people who come down everyday at 12 o'clock to play virtual reality. Down in Houston we have a regular group from the local IBM office," said Jeff Herman.

"We believe we get people who wouldn't normally come into our centres coming in to play virtual reality. And our research tells us that they're staying around to spend additional monies."

Edison Bros admit that VR hasn't been the phenomenal success that they had initially thought it would be. But they are satisfied with the small profit they have made and consider the venture a success because of the important, extra business it has attracted to their locations.

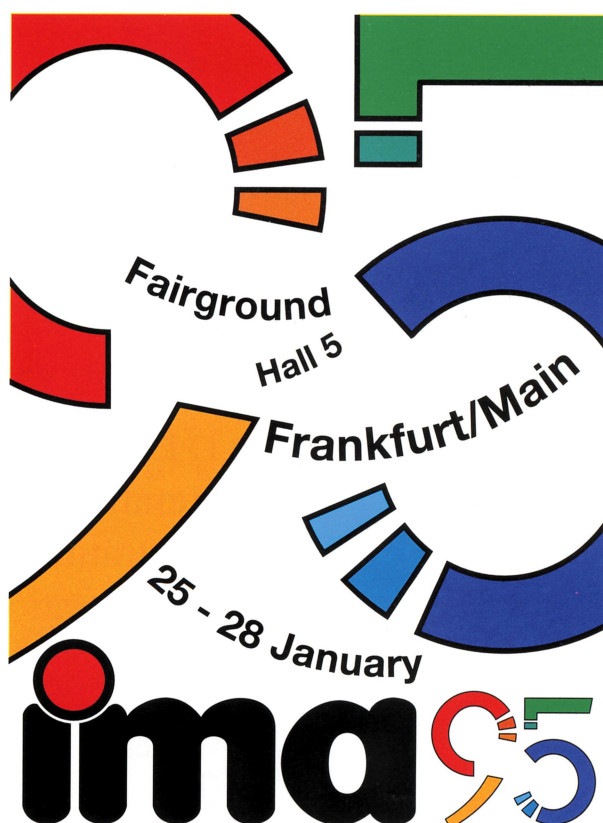
And they are optimistic about the technology's future:

"The software just isn't where we want it to be - yet. But



Looking down on the games area at Exhilarama

the software is getting better and the prices are coming down. It's going to make it easier of everyone to make some money with virtual reality," concluded Mr Herman.



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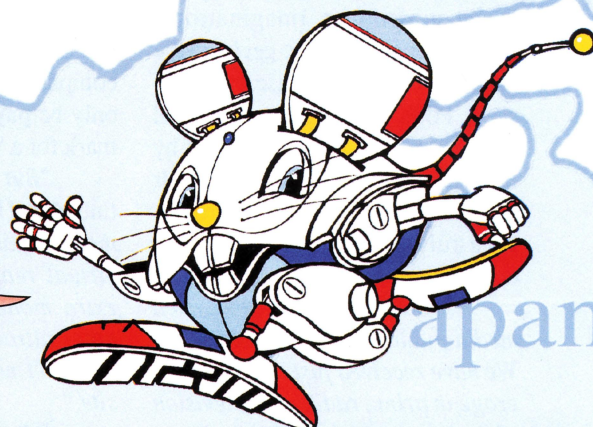
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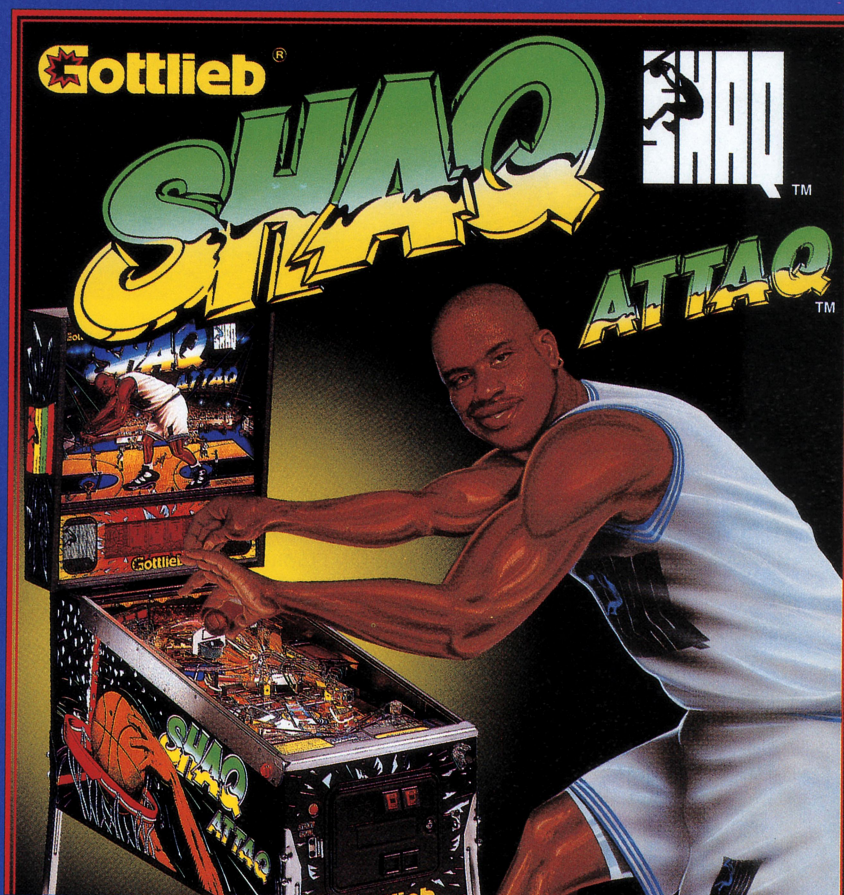
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## PINBALL MARKET PLACE



# Pinball Expo '94

*Delano Reiss, of Australia's Bumper Action Amusements, is a Pinball enthusiast and coin-op machine collector of renown, he dropped in on Pinball Expo '94 while in the USA and filed this report for Cash Box.*



A bunch of pinball enthusiasts who have been coming to Pinball Expo since it was established 10 years ago. Holding the Expo jacket is Steve Kordek, designer of countless classic pins of the 40's and 50's. Seated to the immediate right of Steve are Rob Berk and Mike Pacek, the Expo organisers

Pinball Expo '94 was the 10th anniversary of the event and no expense was spared to make this a great show and a great experience for all who attended. Chicago, home of the Pinball was a fitting venue and Pinball lovers from around the world gathered from November 10 to 13 for a smorgasbord of Pinball play, Pinball talk, and Pinball fun..

In all, around 600 lovers of the silver ball from Australia, Japan, Germany, Holland, England and the USA attended and were greeted with the vision of a 30,000 sq ft hall, full of pinball machines and parts. Machines ranged from early one ball machines with no flippers to the very latest Freddy Krueger, Maverick, and Road Show.

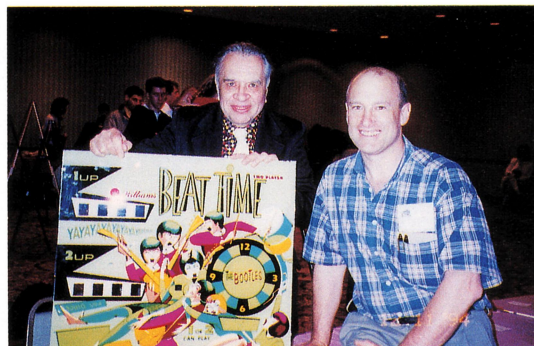
I arrived Wednesday night just as the registration table was being set up. Soon after Bob Berk arrived and it was on for young and old. There was excitement in the air as everyone talked pinball and more pinball. I thought I was an enthusiast but when these Americans get going, they take a power of beating.

Late night or not all were up bright and early on the Thursday morning for the tour of the Electrical Windings factory.

You might think this sounds dull, but it was quite the contrary.

This factory produces all the coils, transformers and other parts for all the pinball factories and has been doing so since 1937. It had a wonderful, well worn, old world feel about it. The present owner Donal Murphy has one of the best pinball collections in the world and it was an experience to see brand new machines from the 40's, 50's, 60's all in line, one after another, ready to play.

Next stop was to Sega Pinball to see Maverick in full production with Frankenstein test models on the



In Pinball Heaven, Del Reiss (right) talks to former Bally designer of the 60's & 70's, Jerry Kelly who's holding one of his backglass designs

Below: Just some of the Pinball books, etc that was at the Expo







From left: Ace Gottlieb designer Jon Norris, Del Reiss and former Grand Wizard of Pinball, Rick Stretta

side lines. We got the full tour, front to back, with cup cakes, a cup of tea and a Maverick poster thrown in. Sonic the Hedgehog had already found his way onto the board room door and I'm wondering what Sega will do with their pinball production next, you'd have to think that their beloved Sonic will soon find his way onto a Pinball back-glass.

I also got a tour of the Premier Gottlieb factory. This was also very impressive, the quality of their product really showed and unlike Sega Pinball which is basically an assembly plant, Premier make the majority of their components themselves at the Bensenville plant.. Freddy Kreuger was on its 6th production run and has been really good for the company. Shaq Attaq, the next on line, was being tested and looks another winner.

Then it was back to Pinball Expo '94 for a seminar on "How to play Pinball" by Richard Shapero, barrister and Pinball fanatic. You never realised what was possible till you saw this guy.

The doors opened to the show at 6 o'clock and the place burst into action as 250 pinballs started at once. What happened next could only be described as a feeding frenzy as 600 odd people indulged in their favourite pastime. There were machine parts, books, big silver balls and, of course, the pinball competition.

This was taken very seriously with players in their special clothes and a small towel on their belt to dry sweaty fingers. The competition went for four days, finally emerging with a new Grand Wizard and a few lesser wizards who all got huge pinball trophies.

During the next three days

there were numerous seminars such as "How did they build... ?", "Shopping for your pinball properly", "Reading and understanding schematics", "Designing a pinball machine", and "Cows, Dohos and Leprechauns - dot matrix animation in pinball".

At night you had the option of playing pinball, (the machines were available 24 hours a day), or going to pinball movies like "Tommy" or "Tilt". There was also a fireside chat up in Bob Berk's penthouse for in depth questions with designers, people such as Wayne Neyes, Python Angelo, Norm Clark, Steve Kirk, Pat Lawlor, Jon Norris, Jim Patla, and the list goes on. It was incredibly inter-

esting and an absolutely unforgettable experience.

Saturday heralded the pinball auction with about 260 machines for sale. Things weren't that cheap as a lot of the public turned up, but there were a lot of games there you would never find elsewhere.

That night there was the banquet with some 350 people attending for the awards, quizzes and other entertainment. All the major manufacturers were there and they donated some great prizes for the raffle.

All in all, four days at the Pinball Expo was quite exhausting.....my feet were swollen but my heart was glowing..... *I'll be back.*

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Game 1

GAME 1:

**Clues:** Not many clues for this one, it's an oldie, circa early 80's by Taito, but hardly hard to pick. As crude as it may look, it went well for a while and then sunk like a nuclear sub.

GAME 2:

**Clues:** This one's a bit harder, but shouldn't be too hard. It's certainly not *NBA Jam*, *Run & Gun* or *Street Hoop*. Players selected a National team and the Anthem of that team was played at games start. It never hit the high spots of later Basketball games, but kept dribbling along for a fair time.



Game 2

GAME 3:

**Clues:** Could be tough (it's meant to be) It's a 2 Player, early 90's system game based in medieval times where the player had to cross swords with a whole heap of bad guys along the way to .....wait for it..... *rescue the dolly bird Princess from the evil King's castle.*

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# Barcrest Ltd

From its small beginnings in 1968 as a private company, Barcrest has now emerged as one of the leading players in the international amusement and leisure industries. They are now the largest manufacturers of AWP's in the United Kingdom for pubs and jackpot machines for clubs. They have impressive export sales across Europe, north and south America and Australasia.

Barcrest is a subsidiary of Bass PLC, one of the UK's largest brewers and one of the world's largest hoteliers with its "Holiday Inn" brand. Among its other leisure interests, Bass owns chains of betting shops, bingo clubs, and bowling alleys, as well as BLMS, a large UK operator of gaming and amusement machines.

The operating experience of BLMS has often helped Barcrest finetune its machines and identify market trends. The two sister companies jointly developed the successful Limelight video jukebox, a product which enables music to be updated by satellite.

Other Barcrest products, aside from the gaming devices

that they're famous for, include a fantasy photo booth and a data retrieval system. The Photo-Star booth takes both conventional portraits and ones where the person's image is super-imposed over a fantasy background. The scenes include tropical islands, famous landmarks and gorgeous members of the opposite sex.

The Datapak electronic data retrieval system was designed to collect data from coin-operated machines for security and management purposes. They now have over 50,000 of the units in operation.

However, it is their many and varied gaming devices that Barcrest are famous for. They have been one of the key players in this sector of the industry and have pioneered some major innovations like the introduction of processor based machines.

Barcrest have made a substantial investment in their Ashton-under-Lyne facility - it is completely computerised and much of the production is automated. Covering 100,000 sq. feet and employing over 300 people, the factory has enormous design and manufacturing capabilities.

With their latest range of machines, Barcrest have introduced a lot of new ideas. The emphasis is on fun, innovation and providing a high level of entertainment for players.

This has meant the development of totally new games as well as fresh approaches to old themes.

Barcrest's extensive library of easily inserted games includes Poker, Joker Poker, Deuces, Blackjack, Keno, Bingo, Spinning Reels and many more. There are AWP's, Club machines, Bingo and Arcade games and SWP's (Skill with Prize games). In 1990 the company won the awards for the best SWP and Club machines.

Games can be presented in a multi game format or as a dedicated single game. There are multi-function touch screens which probably offer the most player involvement and flexibility for the operator, or button formats which suit dedicated games because of their simplicity and ability for rapid play.

Barcrest games have been approved in most major jurisdictions and machines are constantly being tailored to meet the requirements of new jurisdictions and customers.

From the very beginning Barcrest has committed itself to overseas expansion and over the years have developed a solid bank of knowledge on legislative requirements as well as patterns of play around the world. Specific games are tailored to specific countries and this probably played a large part in the company being awarded the Queens Award for Export.

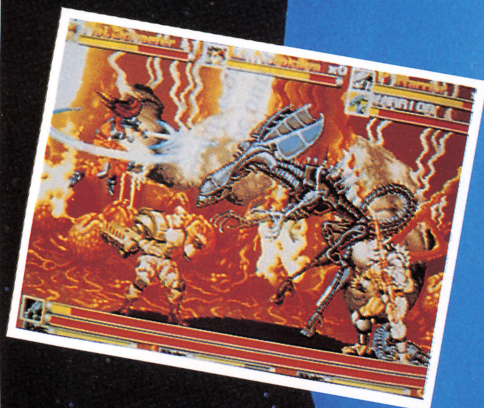
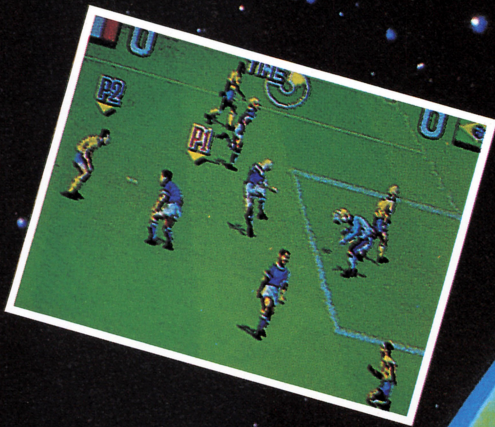
Barcrest also take pride in their service department which provides support, fast turnaround in spares and continuous access to product information. At the heart of the department is the Barcrest Bulletin Board which gives customers access to the Barcrest computer 24 hours a day, every day.

Barcrest produced the Limelight Video Jukebox in conjunction with sister operating company BLMS





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David Hankin  
Fred Milner



# FEC's Are Not New

## *But they do represent a new era in coin-op*

Jack Rodios

The 'buzz' today is all about FEC's, Family Entertainment Centres, or some call them FFC's, Family Fun Centres, but what is so different about them.

Why, almost overnight are FEC's so different to what's been available for many years.

I myself entered the industry with an establishment that had indoor mini Golf, a Slot Car track, table games, novelty games, the latest in coin-op video and pinball, a party area and fast food.

It was titled the Engadine Family Leisure Centre, and it was opened in 1978.

Apart from having to deal with a mongrel Municipal Council that were living in the dark ages and convinced by the do gooders within, that I was out to completely destroy the moral fibre of the areas youth, and a landlord who was positive that we were making at least a million bucks a week, the centre was very successful.

As far as the industry went, the EFLC was no big deal, there were many similar type establishments and where mine went where all good places with hungry landlords end up

going, (Chinese Restaurants) many have continued to operate and are still in business.

Yet here we are, 15 odd years down the track and all anyone wants to talk about is FEC's, as if they are something new and exciting.

Looking at the situation just on the surface, there's probably good reason to wonder what it's all about, but when you look below the surface of today's FEC's, it can be seen that though they are similar to the type of establishment I describe above, they are also very different, and there's little doubt that FEC's are the future of this industry.

Though most of the success FEC's are enjoying is the result of the professional way they are being established and managed, they have been assisted by several other factors and when these are all put together, it becomes easier to understand why family centres are going to continue their rise in popularity, and why they are so important to the future of coin-op.

For a start, the teenage patrons of the arcades and Leisure Centres of the late 70's and early 80's are now joining the ranks of parents and un-

like *their parents*, they are partial, in varying degrees to spending time in amusement centres.

They know that most of the garbage written about "Pinball Parlours", that brain-washed their parents was incorrect, but they also know that there were some establishments where things went on that they'd

rather their kids didn't come into contact with.

So the concept of large urban amusement centres where they can satisfy their kid's love of the glitzy games and attractions, their own in many cases, and their wife's desire of "family togetherness", relatively cheaply, holds a lot of appeal.

To get the type of entertainment that today's good FEC's provide, it was once a case of waiting till a carnival or such, visited town, but now with the centres being set up in and around malls, which have become the community meeting places, carnival type fun is readily available on an everyday shopping trip.

There is no waiting involved, nor is there any extra travel, the people were going to the mall anyway and the FEC is becoming a familiar part of accepted, everyday life.

Unlike the straight, coin-op arcades that made their way into the 'hard to rent' areas of malls in many countries, the FEC's, many of them built around a popular theme, are getting prominent positions and are being promoted as attractions by mall managements, along with the key retail outlets, cinemas, and food halls,

Another aspect, and one that may not go down too well with a lot of early 80's style operators is that a large number of new people have come into the industry to open FEC's, and they have brought with them a degree of professionalism that has benefited the whole industry.

Make no mistake, the FEC's of today with a good mix of attractions, arcade games, redemption, food, drink and predominantly *fun*, have a huge future and will be the key to this industry's development into the next millennium.





# IAAPA

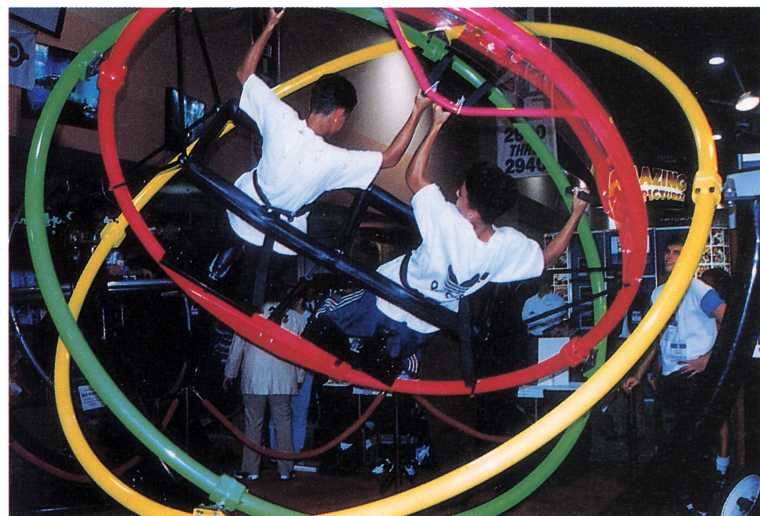
*From Shirley Fang - Taiwan Amusement Express*

## HIGH TECHNOLOGY PIECES STEAL THE SHOW AT IAAPA

At the '94 IAAPA in Miami last November, seminars and workshops were presented on the first day in Spanish, Portuguese, German, Japanese and English. There were some 40 seminars during the course of the show on almost every subject relating to theme parks and FECs - PR promotion, design and management, waterparks, mini golf courses, rides, food services, financing, laws and regulations, etc; seminars were held in English only after the first day but interpretation in four languages were available in most cases. Food service 2000 got the award for best seminar presentation.

A view of just a small part of the IAAPA show floor. It is an enormous exhibition with over 800 exhibitors and 20,000 visitors.

The show kicked off with the "What's New Theatre" held at the Jackie Gleason Theatre adjacent to the Miami Beach Convention Center. Although originally intended



to inform the audience on developments based on the "What's New Around the World" program, the show was presented in such a way that it appeared as if each speaker was doing an ad campaign for his own product.

The Count showed slides of his park, Duinrell in Holland; and Doug Trumball, of course, promoted

Orbitrons are doing good business in parks. This two seater machine is particularly suited for "family" use.

the Luxor project Las Vegas. I don't think the "What's New" idea was generated clearly to the audience but nonetheless, the production was entertaining as live performances by the Honeymooners were inserted throughout the "show and tell".

The Convention Center itself was a two-storey complex with conference rooms on the main and second floor.

The main exhibition hall which encompassed four halls (ABCD) housed 2500 booths and booths 2501-2940 were located in two separate alcoves off Concourse C and D (a little unfortunate for these exhibitors). The back of the convention centre led out to Sunshine Plaza where outdoor exhibitions were held.

Exact figures and breakdown of visitors were unavailable at time of printing but as of the morning of November 5, 20,000 people were monitored as to have visited the show.



*Over page please*



# IAAPA

Most exhibitors expressed that the show this year was quieter and there were more South American visitors than usual. This is most likely due to the geographical location, not unusual to this year's AMOA.

Undoubtedly, the focus this year was on virtual reality games and VR simulation rides. Virtuality had four standing and four sitting units. Software was still mainly concentrated on combat themes but there was also a billiards game.

Greystone had two of their Mercury units on display which looked similar to sleek Sea-Doo's set on a full motion base. The unit runs to about half a million dollars so a profit sharing arrangement would probably be the obvious choice. Orbotron had an X-O-TRON VR on display. The advantage of the game is that it uses no AC power but is battery operated. The player can rotate 360 degrees and use his hands and/or body movement for directional control. The headset is also much lighter in weight.

IMAX was pushing their Ridefilm 18-passen-

ger modular design which was completed in September. This compact unit is supposed to be more cost effective and allow operators to generate faster returns. It can be used as a single unit or can be linked to other units and the product is geared for operators with space limitations such as FECs. A mock-up was displayed at the show but without the software or the motion base. IMAX will have three 4-minute films ready by the end of February next year and six by the end of 1995.

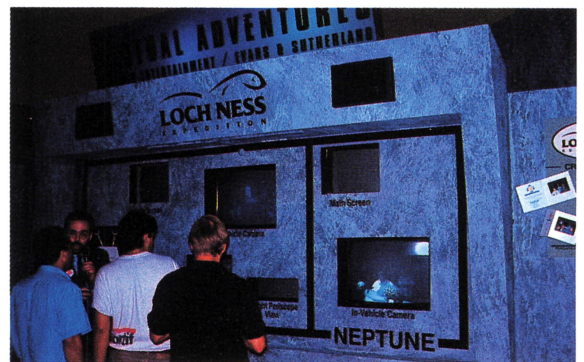
Iwerks came out the big winner in this year's IAAPA: they took out the Best Major Ride/Attraction Exhibit and their products won the Show Production and Entertainment, and Technology Applied to Amusements categories. A mock-up of their Loch Ness Expedition was set up in one corner while across the booth, a simulation ride was always in progress with a constant queue of at least 20 people. It was certainly one of the busiest booths at the show. During IAAPA's summer meeting next year in Hong Kong Iwerks plans to

launch a new unit at Hong Kong's Ocean Park.

ICE Associates and Aslan Technologies had an outdoor exhibition in Sunshine Plaza where they placed their SU-1000 unit which some people may remember from ACME '94. Aslan Technologies describe the unit as "a two passenger unit consisting of two single-seat pneumatically positioned pods mounted on a ro-



The X-O-Tron VR system allows players to rotate 360 degrees and use their bodies to control the game - while in a virtual world!



Iwerks Lochness Expedition really drew in the crowds. It also took out the award for the best major attraction exhibit



ICE Associates and Aslan Technologies' SU-1000, enough to thrill the bravest person - or make them sick!

tating platform. Each pod contains a 27-inch video monitor, full stereo audio system, and an interactive control panel".

The ride lasts just under four minutes - I lasted three and hit the STOP button. The ride gives a maximum rotation speed of 48rpm but inside the pod, you actually feel as if you're taking off in a fighter plane. The skin on my face was pulled back and sweat broke out all over. Absolutely nauseating experience!

Greystone's Mercury units, a unique form of "face down VR". The machines are mounted on a full motion base but don't come cheap.







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# European Round-Up

## ITALY WAITING FOR CHANGE

The political instability in Italy is mirrored right through Italian industry, including the coin machine industry. Italy itself, and the industry are waiting for change.

Whether the latest proposals to the authorities from SAPAR - the Public Leisure Attractions Equipment section of AGIS, the General Italian Entertainments Association, will be the beginning of a new era for the industry remains to be seen, as do so many other things in Italian life.

The current legislation does not allow any form of gaming machine, something which the industry hopes to change. However, the outcome of what people in the amusement sector describe as a crisis, is a matter for conjecture. In spite of this, the Italian amusement trade continues to advance and develop in the difficult situation that exists and have lodged a new set of proposals for gaming machines.

## THE HAVE NOTS

Other EU countries currently making similar proposals to their governments include France and Ireland. In the case of France the proposal is being put up against a lottery proposal and in Ireland it comes at a time when the government is considering the introduction of casinos.

These three EU countries - Ireland, Italy and France - are the leaders of the group of "have nots". Although the circumstances in all three countries are different, the problem is the same - convincing the authorities that low level gaming holds no threat to the community, government sponsored lotteries or any other existing institution.

They have a difficult task and the presence of "suspect" or "grey area" machines, where they exist,

makes that task even more difficult. However, it must be time for the authorities in these countries to acknowledge that the coin machine industry should be treated in the same way as existing businesses such as betting, lotteries, casinos etc.

The playing field must be levelled, giving all participants an equal chance to pursue their business activities, under strict but fair regulations. There is little doubt that the EU will eventually insist on this, but how much better it would be to have agreement without costly court proceedings, which would certainly give many in the media another opportunity to dig up their biased views on the subject.

## DETAILS

Maurizio Maneschi, secretary of SAPAR, editor of *Automat*, and organiser of ENADA said that the current proposals to the authorities suggested the use of a game in which the player could win up to 30 tokens, for which he could receive redemption tickets, replays or a refund.

Also included in the proposals is the idea of "*instituting a Professional Register to provide official guidelines for operators and define codes of practice and membership*".

Sindaut, another trade association are making similar, but not identical proposals and it has been agreed that it would be much better if both organisations work together. One meeting between both sides has already taken place with another planned.

It is hoped that the issue be discussed in parliament soon but the financial and other problems facing Italy are likely to delay this. The proposals could mean that at least two new machines would be installed in 100,000 locations, creating much

## Reports by Martin Dempsey of "Coin-op News".

needed jobs and boosting commercial activity and exports.

Around 45,000 machines are installed throughout Italy, including 300,000 video games, 5,000 pinballs, 10,000 jukeboxes and 90,000 soccer games, pool tables and kiddie rides.

## ENADA

The attendance at ENADA late last year was slightly up on the previous year, even though the general strike on the first day kept some visitors away. More than 90 exhibitors filled 3,500 square metres of exhibition space - the biggest turnout in recent years.

As is usual with ENADA, there was a lot of the same product on the

*To page 78 please*

The family fun of "Bakoom" from Banpresto attracted young and old at ENADA







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# European Round-Up

stands of different distributors. Many stands showed Midway's Cruisin' USA, current PCB games in a variety of different video cabinets, and all the latest pins along with some older ones.

Most attendees were impressed with the equipment on display and despite their problems were reasonably optimistic for the future of coin-op in Italy.

## PARK SHOW INTERNATIONAL LIVES UP TO ITS NAME

The 4th Park Show International held at the Rimini Fair, Italy caters for the manufacturers and distributors of equipment for amusement and water parks, fair grounds and travelling shows.

It was supported by ANESV (The National Association of Travelling Show Owners), ANCASVI (The National Association of Show Equipment Manufacturers) and Union Parchi (The Association representing Permanent Parks). Representatives of European travelling show associations and trade delegations from a number of countries attended.

The success of the first three shows, which were attended by over 12,000 visitors from 35 countries created a lot of interest in Park Show '94. The event is held every two years and attracts many international visitors. It was noticeable this year that the attendance included many visitors from Central and Eastern Europe.

## EXPANDING

Amusement parks and travelling shows continue to be

rapidly developing sectors, not only in Italy but right across Europe and Park Show is there to help owners and managers of these businesses, offering all the latest products and a selection of relevant seminars and conferences, as a comprehensive package for those in the trade.

One hundred and fifty exhibitors occupied three large hall with a total area of over 20,000 square metres. They offered everything necessary for equipping amusement parks and travelling shows, including playground, fair ground and water park equipment.

Also on offer were consultation and design services for parks; visitor transport systems; electrical and electro-mechanical components; special effects, safety and fire fighting equipment. The show was also held in an area outside the halls. Large merry-go-rounds and attractions were set up outdoors.

## SEMINARS

A number of debates, meetings, seminars and press conferences were held during Park Show. These gave members of the trade many opportunities to gather data and express their views about a whole range of issues affecting the development of the industry.

Safety, the disabled, juvenile matters, problem areas, marketing, performing rights, staff management, and social activity in parks were amongst the issues discussed.

Other fringe events included an International Harley Davidson gathering, a Sicilian puppet show, a three dimensional art school show and an exhibition of antique amusement machines.

## VIRTUAL ENCOUNTERS

A separate show devoted to virtual reality products was held alongside Park Show. It presented the latest virtual reality technology and products for amusement parks and showed many exciting possibilities this new form of entertainment has to offer.

Technological theme parks are already operating around the world and it is likely that this sector has much growth and development ahead, as the new technology unveils new and exciting possibilities.

The event was divided into sections, including an exhibition of existing equipment; showings of films made with special effects; a preview of Walt Disney's latest film, "The Lion King"; computer animated special effects for amusement parks and a conference on "Interactive virtual parks". There were examples of virtual reality used in major US amusement parks and an in-depth look at how to set up innovative parks.

Park Show International in Rimini, Italy





## PARK EQUIPMENT

The selection of park equipment on show was attractively presented by manufacturers and covered the whole area of parks and travelling shows. Italian visitors and those from overseas were given an array of equipment to choose from that left them in no doubt as to the importance of this show.

A now familiar sight at major trade shows, the Thomson Entertainment Systems (formerly Hughes Rediffusion) Venturer attracted a constant stream of visitors. Bertazzon showed their spectacular carousel which is available in different sizes ranging from 5 to 15 metres in diameter and Zamperla's latest attraction was the RotoShake ride that loops 82 ft into the air.

Other attractions being offered included Venture River from Euro Jumping, a water ride featuring canoes and an Indian wigwam, a range of road and rail trains from Dotto and Tschu-Tschu and Soli Bumper Cars from I E Park.

## COIN-OP EQUIPMENT

In spite of the fact that this was a park show, coin-operated amusement games were much in evidence. Most popular were kiddie rides, video games, pin tables and a wide variety of novelty games.

There were many pushers, card games, fruit machines, bingos and all sorts of gambling and grey area machines. Many of these carried "For Export" signs as they are not permitted in the Italian market.



Paul Johnston, sales and marketing director of Bell Fruit Manufacturing with their new video game Rise of the Robots



## UNITED KINGDOM

### UK COMPANIES PRODUCE SOME INNOVATIVE GAMES

If the UK amusement industry needs innovation to improve sales and earnings, then AL Preview '95 was a happy event for those involved in the trade, and much of the innovation was from within, rather than outside the UK.

The stars of the AL Preview last year were the UK products - Spida Strika from Sound Leisure and Rise of the Robots from Bell Fruit.

This shot in the arm for the UK industry could not have come at a better time as it coincides with the build up this month's ATEI and attempts by BACTA to promote UK manufactured products at ATEI

### AND THERE'S MORE...

In addition to these two items there were further innovations, including an Italian manufactured Santa and Reindeer kiddie ride, shown by SB machines of Porthcawl. This attractive piece caught the eye of all involved in operating kiddie rides and many others, some of whom are now considering KR operating on the perceived strength of this one piece.

Also new were Point Blank from Namco which had its European launch at the AL Preview and Killer Instinct from Nintendo/Midway, shown on the Deith Leisure stand. This was one of the most played games at the show.

Most of the video games and pinballs on show at AL Preview had been shown the previous week at AmusExpo in Paris. In fact, there were a number of games that appeared in Paris which were not shown at AL Preview.

### VISITORS

The number of exhibitors at AL Preview was around the same as last year but the number of visitors was down. Although the first day was busy enough, there was an obvious lack of visitors on the second day. In spite of this, most exhibitors seemed content with reaction to their products.

The general opinion amongst both exhibitors and visitors was that the UK industry was beginning to stabilise. In view of the inaccuracy of previous predictions about recoveries, no one was being any more optimistic than that.

AL Preview '95 coincided with an Oktoberfest promotion of German food, beer and wine in the Novotel, and this added to the good humoured atmosphere. All the various categories of both amusement and gaming equipment were well represented, with the latest models on show.

### SPIDA STRIKA

Spida Strika is a brand new concept and was one of the major hits at the recent AMOA show in San Antonio, Texas. It is a very attractive and colourful game, described by manufacturers, Sound Leisure, as the "ultimate amusement prize vendor".



# European Round-Up

It is a six player crane-type game where the player manoeuvres and eventually releases a spider to strike several different sized metal buttons to release a prize, including items like jewellery and soft toys.

The combination of revolving prizes and the opportunity to discover how skilful a player you are attracts both young and not-so-young customers. It has a lot of player appeal and is a visually exciting game that combines movement and colour with music to the greatest possible advantage.

Spida Strika is manufactured by Sound Leisure and is available throughout the UK and Europe from Sound Leisure and Deith Leisure. It

has been licensed to Atari/Time Warner for the United States.

## RISE OF THE ROBOTS

Two years ago Bell Fruit embarked on a program to use their existing game development capability to break into the video games market. That program is now 90% complete and the result is Rise of the Robots.

The international launch will be at ATEI this month

*"Rise of the Robots is the debut product from BFM's multi-media development division and boasts superior sound effects, gameplay and graphics,"* said Paul Johnston, Bell Fruit's marketing director.



Leon Deith and Andy Orits from Deith Leisure with Sega's Star Wars and Daytona USA

The game features droids at the Electrocorp HQ taken on by a human volunteer housed in the ECO35-2 Cyborg chassis. It is the player's task to take the Cyborg into the Electrocorp building, battle against the renegade droids and defeat The Supervisor.

Other characters in the game include The Loader, The Builder, The Crusher, The Exterminator and The Sentry, all of whom have unique combat skills/ The game uses music by Bryan May - legendary former guitarist from Queen and comes in a specially designed BFM cabinet.

## OTHER GAMES

At AL Preview, Deith Leisure showed Primal Rage from Atari; Midway's Cruisin' USA in sit down, sit in and upright formats; Desert Tank, Virtua Cop and Star Wars from Sega; and on the pinball front, Corvette and Roadshow.

Brent Leisure launched Namco's Gun Bullet and showed existing games including Ridge Racer 2, Suzuka 8 Hours 2, Final Lap R and Gottlieb's Rescue 911

Electrocoin had a variety of games including Data East's Tattoo Assassins, Konami's Racin' Force, operation Wolf 3 and Real Puncher from Taito, and Data East's Maverick pinball.

DMD presented the Freddy - A Nightmare on Elm Street pinball from Gottlieb as they were recently appointed Gottlieb distributors.



Des Burnes of MHG Services, Joanne Needham and Alan Black of Sound Leisure, Alex Hook of Bell Fruit and Clive Birdsall of Sound Leisure with their latest novelty game, Spida Strika



Mike Nevin and Shane Breaks with Namco's gun game Point Blank.



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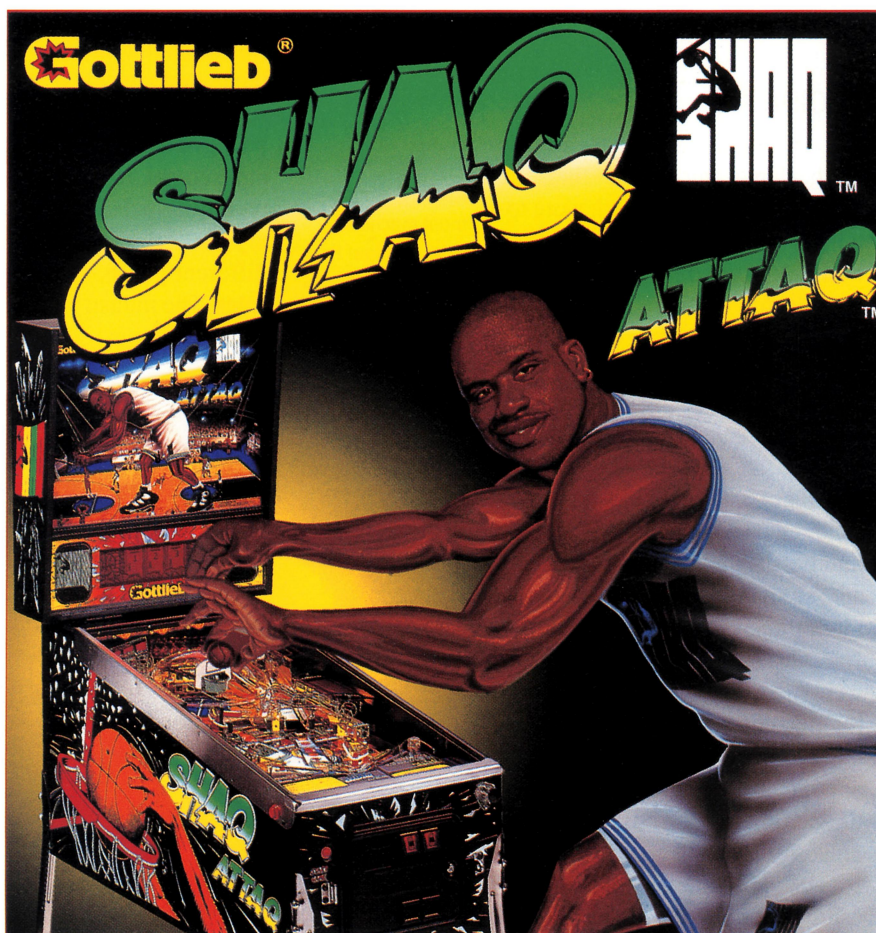
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# European Round-Up

## THE NETHERLANDS

### VAN EXPO SEES OFF "PIEK" MACHINES

VAN Expo, which was held in the RAI Exhibition Centre, Amsterdam from Wednesday 2nd to Friday 4th November, 1994 was the second such exhibition this year in The Netherlands. The first was in January - the traditional time for the show and it was held in Maastricht.

The holding of a second show in the same year was made necessary by the introduction of regulations that demand the removal of certain types of gaming machines from locations by the end of 1994.

"Piek" machines are the cause of much of the present difficulties in the market in The Netherlands. What was once considered to be an ideal piece of legislation, and one on which many other countries based their own laws, has had its problems.

Piek machines are not illegal. They don't make as many small payouts as normal machines but make more than the usual number of large payouts. It is claimed that this has caused player problems and resulted in excessive gambling and alleged addiction, attracting the attention of local councils to the industry.

### RANDOM RUNNER

The first and most famous Piek machine was the Random Runner but most other manufacturers later produced their own machines with similar features. The result was a new regulation banning these type of machines from 1/1/95. In some cases this means that the offending machines may be replaced with "normal" gaming machines, but this is not the end of the problem.

Many councils were so upset with what they considered to be an abuse of the law that they decided to ban gaming machines - including

the "normal" machines that did not have problems associated with them.

The councils can completely ban gaming machines from locations such as fast food outlets etc, and they can reduce the number of machines in bars etc, from three machines to one.

During VAN Expo a number of meetings were held with a view to making representations to the authorities to introduce a national regulation that would mean at least one "normal" gaming machine could be located in fast food and other similar outlets, where up to three could have been previously sited.

### AVOIDABLE

Most in the industry in The Netherlands recognise that the present difficulties, which were totally avoidable, were brought about by a lack of self discipline amongst manufacturers, distributors and operators of gaming machines.

Although the law was not broken, certain practices were engaged in that enhanced earnings in the short term. The predictable result was that local councils and others used their powers to reduce the number of gaming machines in bars and similar locations from maximum three to maximum one.

In some fast food outlets they were successful in eliminating gaming machines altogether. So much has been lost by the short sighted approach of so many involved in the gaming sector, and it now seems unlikely that it will ever be regained.

Some made a lot of money by using certain features in the machines and whether it was worth the damage that was ultimately caused or not remains to be seen. It can only be hoped that those in the industry in other countries will learn a lesson from the experience.

Because of this situation in The Netherlands, the ability of Dutch companies to penetrate the international markets will now be more important than ever before.

## AMUSEMENT

On a brighter note, the current problems with gaming machines in The Netherlands have been good for non-gaming amusement machines. There were never as many video games, pinballs, jukeboxes and varied amusement products shown at VAN Expo before.

The main reason is that where Piek machines are not replaced by other gaming machines, it is hoped to replace them with amusement machines - at least in the short term, but as things now stand this could be permanent.

Most current videos and pinballs were shown and Veltmeijer used the occasion for the European launch of Namco's Ace Driver.

This change of circumstances in The Netherlands will good for the manufacturing and distributing sector in the short term as there will be big demand for both gaming and amusement machines into the early part of 1995. However, on 1st January 1995 the industry will enter a different phase, with a new set of rules. The industry will never be the same again.

At VAN, amusement machines were stronger than ever and Premier's Freddy Krueger was very popular





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Lisa Loeb & Nine Stories	-	Stay (I missed you)	Kylie Minogue	-	Confide in Me
Prince	-	Space	Lighter Shade of Brown	-	Hey D.J.
Ace of Base	-	Don't Turn Around	Billy Idol	-	Speed
Boyz 2 Men	-	I'll Make Love to You	Michael Bolton	-	Lean on me
Bon Jovi	-	Always	C.J. Lewis	-	Everything is alright
Rolling Stones	-	Out of Tears	K.W.S	-	Ain't nobody (loves me better)
D:Ream	-	Blame it on me	Taylor Dayne	-	Original Sin
Marcella Detroit	-	I'm no angel	Snap	-	Welcome to Tomorrow
D.J. Bobo	-	Everybody	Roxette	-	Fireworks
Aerosmith	-	Blind Man	Richard Marx	-	The way she loves me
Whigfield	-	Saturday night	Eagles	-	Get over it

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## Cyber Commando

Namco Ltd

Though relatively quiet for most of the year, Namco closed 1994 with the release of four games that cover four different areas and which all appear to be pretty good prospects.

This one, Cyber Commando is a futuristic, flying, shooting game that will get its fair share of followers. It can't be expected to be as popular as the company's big driving games, but that doesn't mean it won't earn

On the right location it should return some pretty good figures as it's full of fast moving action, very visual, particularly on the big screen, De Luxe model shown below, and always leaves the players thinking they could have done a bit better. The game also comes in a standard sit down model with 26" monitor

Play is by way of two triggered, joy sticks and a throttle that give good control of the cyber craft, the graphics are excellent and the sound, superb.

Verdict: We expect Cyber Commando to do pretty well, but the price will just about make sure it only goes into high volume locations.



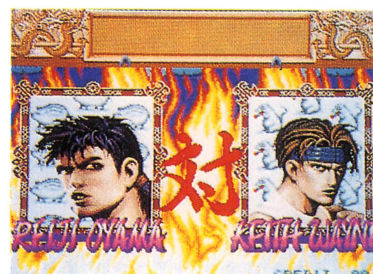
## Power Instinct 2

Atlus

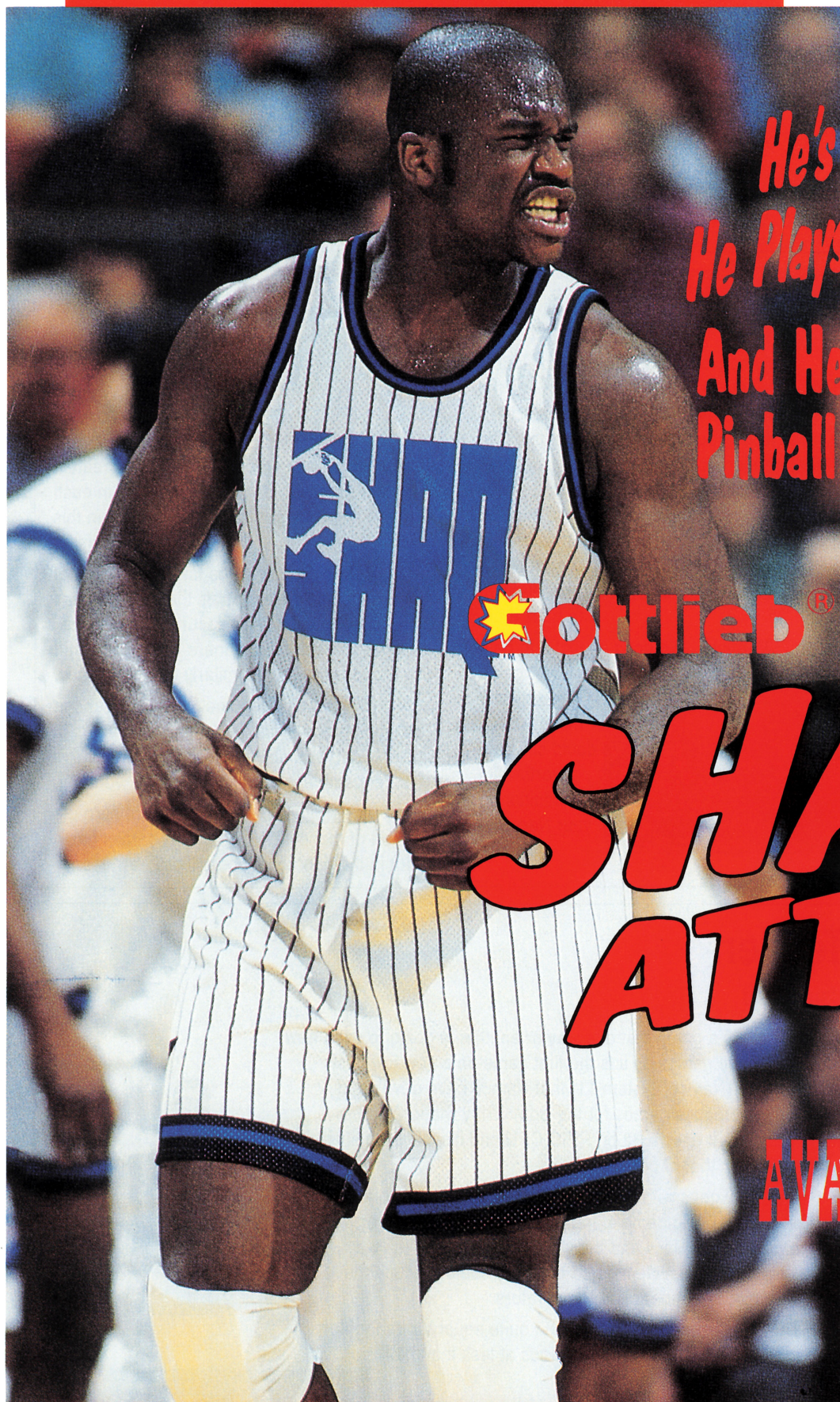
The original Power Instinct was a pretty good, fun fighting game that never got a lot of exposure and came out at a time when it had to face pretty stiff opposition. But it still did reasonably well in several regions. This one is basically more of the same though there are new characters and moves, and the graphics are improved.

The game went very well in Japan when it was first released, but has dropped off considerably since games like Samurai Shodown 2 hit the scene and doesn't look to have the necessary ingredients for 'hit' status.

Verdict: Didn't like the way it dropped in Japan and it's going to have to contend with the Neo Geo games and others like Tekken and Virtua Fighter II wherever it's put into operation, but it is a fun game and could easily surprise in a lot of markets.







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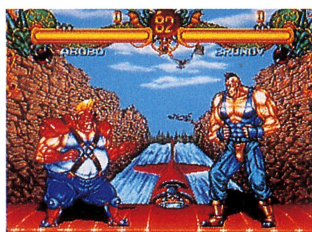
**New Games  
& Products**

## Double Dragon

Technos Neo Geo

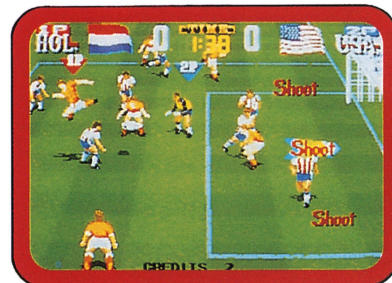
Technos lost the plot a bit with Double Dragon by the time they got to DD3, and the small characters they employed on screen always worked against them, but this Neo Geo version goes back to the original type game and has nice big characters with plenty of moves and heaps of action so it must be given a chance of doing OK, particularly in the inexpensive Neo Geo format that it comes in and with a DD movie now released to back it up.

Verdict: We don't expect it to be a "killer" game by any means, but it could still be a worthwhile addition to your Neo Geo library.



## V-Goal Soccer

Tecmo Ltd



Tecmo have probably had their greatest successes with Soccer games, and in each new one they put out their expertise in this field is emphasised.

V-Goal Soccer is the latest in the line of popular Soccer games the company has produced and it seems assured of doing well in the market despite there being some stiff opposition from similarly themed games.

Everything a genuine Soccer player can do, can be done with the on screen players in V-Goal, probably more and players of this type of game are giving it a nice old work out.

Verdict: Will obviously not earn the sort of money the big fighting games have, but in the right locations will still earn plenty.

## Tekken

Namco Ltd

Tekken is a game that one way or another is going to set a new horizon in video games as it is the first game on a new low cost system board (Namco System 11) that Namco have developed especially to produce games for the Sony "Play Station" home game system. It uses a 32 bit RISC CPU and it's CG capacity is far greater than that of coin-op games.

The story goes with this one that Namco were going to develop a big fighting game along the lines of Virtua Fighter, with texture mapped graphics and the whole bit, but along the way they switched to the system 11 so that they could produce the game at a much cheaper price to operators.

The result is a game that doesn't quite equal Virtua Fighter visually, but will go into operators hands at less than half the price if what we hear is correct.

The game? It's good, could even be very good, this Tekken bloke is a pretty mean cat and though Namco are not renowned for their prowess in making fighting games, they could be on a winner with this one.

Verdict: A good game that presents extremely well and which has a few tricks in it that haven't been seen in fighting games. For our money, Tekken is well worth operators consideration for almost all types of location.





## Mini Dunxx

ICE Inc

Kids Basketball games are almost gilt edged these days as the Basketball craze in fashion and 'speak', sweeps the world. Little kids copy the bigger ones and the natural progression of things sees them wanting to throw baskets wherever they can.

Enter *Mini Dunxx*, ICE's update of the *Half Pint Frenzy* that has ranked as #1 in kids basketball games for some time, *Mini Dunxx* is as swish a kids Basketball game as you'd ever want to see and it's got all the features of the bigger games.

A hoop that moves just enough to make it interesting for kids, great background sounds, cabinet decor that no self respecting kid would walk past without pulling some coin off the 'oldies', and a whole heap more makes *Mini Dunxx* an extremely impressive package that should earn for years.

**Verdict:** Wish all games were as easy as this one to assess, if you've got any sort of kid clientele at all, or want a kid clientele, you can't go wrong with this one



## Shaq Attaq

Premier Technology

Right from the moment you let the first ball go you feel good about *Shaq Attaq*, the latest Gottlieb Pinball from Premier Technology. Though they have recently had great success with *Rescue 911* and *Freddy Krueger*, sports games are Premier's speciality and this one could easily be another *Cue Ball Wizard* in sports bars and pubs, while still holding the younger players who idolise Shaq in the arcades. The game looks to be an all-round beauty to us. Game play is excellent, with both skill players and 'hit and hoppers' able to get equally as much enjoyment out of it and that gives the game that extra 'edge' which sorts the top earning games out from the also rans.

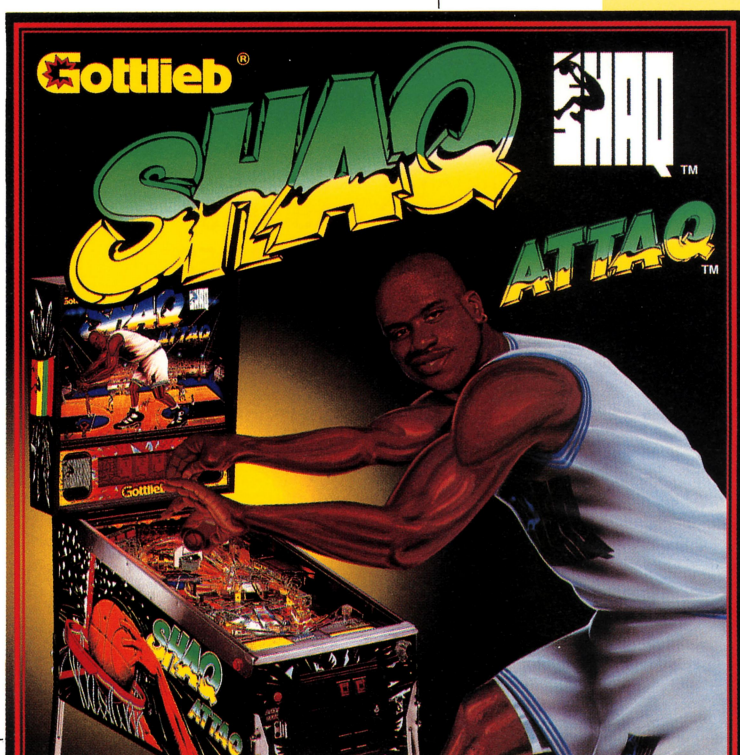
Sound, Dot Matrix and artwork is also top class.

Basketball is the fastest growing and best promoted sport in the world today and in *Shaq Attaq*, Premier have combined Basketball and their expertise in the sports Pinball field with the biggest name in the game, Shaq O'Neil, a licensing coup that's sure to return all involved with some very nice dividends.

The main playfield feature on *Shaq Attaq* is unique, it's a basket and backboard that moves from side to side under a perspex dome which represents the stadium dome, and the player, if he's good enough can actually score a basket with the silver ball.

Everyone keeps telling us that the Pinball boom is over and that may be the case, but it didn't stop players lining up in droves to play this game on it's release in both Sydney and Melbourne recently.

**Verdict:** Don't be surprised at anything *Shaq Attaq* does. We see it as a no risk proposition and when you think that in Australia for example it's around \$2500 cheaper than Corvette, Shaq comes into the "must have" class.







**New Games  
& Products**

## Space Invaders DX Taito Corp

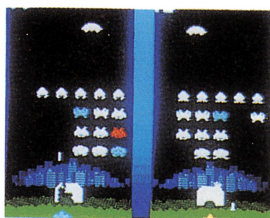
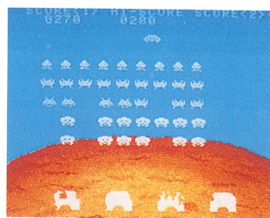
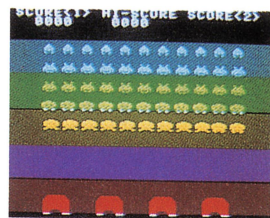
Who in this industry wouldn't like to go back to the heady days of Space Invaders when players all over the world lined up in droves to play video games.

Well, the sad fact of the matter is that you can't go back and Taito's attempt to take us back through their latest version of the famous game, titled Space Invaders DX, seems doomed to failure.

Truth is that though young players may play it once or twice to see what all the 'oldies' keep going on about, they don't go back to it. They in fact see it as further proof that their parents are 'dorks' for continuing to rave on about the now ancient game.

We're not knocking Taito, it was worth a try, but to the young players of today, with reflexes sharpened to lightning pitch from beating up Street Fighters and wheeling Daytona's round the track, Space Invaders DX is slow and dull and a bit of a dolly up with selectable backgrounds,, 2 player play, etc, is not going to change that.

Verdict: If you're into nostalgia go for your life, but if you're into making money, forget it unless you have a location with a large geriatric clientele.



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## UPDATE Raiden DX

Few sequel games are ever going to outperform the Street Fighter games, but the Raiden series of games have also been right up there at the top.

Relatively quiet achievers, Raiden and Raiden II both had (and still have) the capabilities to earn good money week after week, month after month and onwards, so it's not really surprising to see that already, Raiden DX is settling into the same mould.

Though it was first seen in June of this year, the game had a relatively slow start, simply because operators were still getting such good results out of their Raiden II's that they were reluctant to upgrade, but once in the market it was soon seen that DX is also a great game and demand for the game is now very high.

Players are now looking for it and you can't get a better sign than that.

Verdict: There seems little doubt that Raiden DX will perform every bit as well, maybe even better, than the games before it and that makes it a "must have" for video game operators.

Raiden DX is a gilt edged investment, full stop.



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## Bubble Symphony

Taito F3 System

If this game gets close to repeating the performance of the original game it follows, it will go a long way towards putting Taito's F3 system on the coin-op map

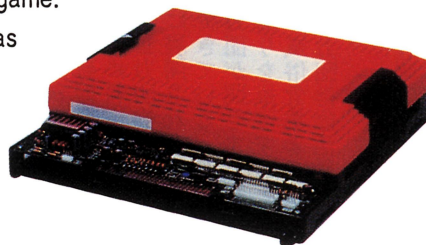
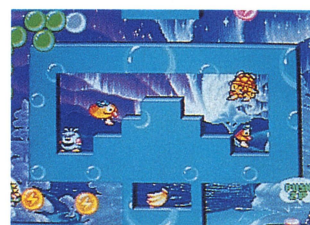
You see, Bubble Symphony is basically Bubble Bobble 2 and Bubble Bobble was a surprisingly successful game a few years ago that not only grabbed players, but kept them coming back time after time. You don't hear it being talked about a lot when operators talk of great games, but it was an achiever in almost all markets.

This one is much more upmarket to look at as would be expected, but it retains a lot of the game play of the former game. It features multiple endings which always leave the player guessing and is a heap of fun to play.

The four characters that players have to choose from, all have unique characteristics that also add a lot of variety to the game.

Bubble Symphony comes up well on screen and as mentioned earlier, it comes on the new Taito F-3 system which makes it very reasonably priced after the mother board is purchased.

Verdict: We expect it to do OK and to give the F3 a bit of a nudge, but it's not likely to emulate the original game in performance



## Alligator Hunt

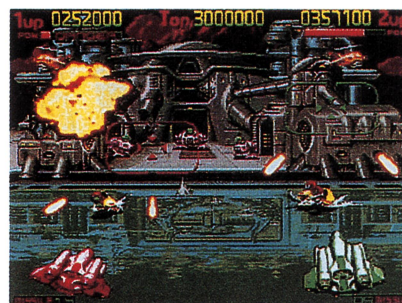
Gaelco

About the only thing we couldn't find in this game was a swag of alligators, but after a while the action was so thick and fast that there was no time to really look for them.

Made by Gaelco of Spain, the makers of World Rally, Alligator Hunt is a routin', tootin', shootin', fightin', flyin', game where the players two little on screen characters, with pistols blazing, skateboard their way through more problems in a couple of minutes, than the average 'hero' would encounter in a lifetime.

Graphics, sound and game play are good and there's a lot of built in fun in this one that could easily attract players.

Verdict: The game has tested very well in Spain and is now being tested in several other countries so it's still an unknown quantity as far as player appeal goes, but it won't surprise us if it gets a reasonable following.





# GAME RATINGS

## Japan

### VIDEO CONVERSION

- 1 Samurai Shodown
- 2 Virtua Fighter
- 3 King of Fighters '94
- 4 Bubble Symphony
- 5 V Goal Soccer
- 6 Armoured Warriors
- 7 Dragon Ball Z2
- 8 Crazy Cross

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Sports Fishing
- 2 Virtua Cop
- 3 Point Blank
- 4 Ridge Racer DX
- 5 Daytona Twin
- 6 Daytona DX
- 7 Lethal Enforcers II
- 8 Virtua Fighter

### PINBALLS

- 1 Star Trek
- 2 World Challenge Soccer
- 3 Royal Rumble
- 4 Demolition Man
- 5 Addams Family

## Hong Kong

### VIDEO CONVERSION

- 1 V Goal Soccer
- 2 Street Hoop
- 3 World Cup '94
- 4 Raiden DX
- 5 Super SF II
- 6 Fantastic Journey
- 7 Speed Spin

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Daytona
- 2 Suzuka 8 Hours 2
- 3 Ridge Racer
- 4 Out Runners

### PINBALLS

- 1 Maverick
- 2 World Cup Soccer
- 3 World Challenge Soccer
- 4 Guns 'n Roses

## United States

### VIDEO

- 1 Lethal Enforcers II
- 2 Street Hoop
- 3 Virtua Fighter
- 4 King of Fighters '94
- 5 Raiden DX
- 6 Primal Rage
- 6 Gals Panic 2
- 7 Mortal Kombat II
- 8 Dark Stalkers

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Daytona USA
- 2 Cruis'n USA
- 3 T-Mek
- 4 Ridge Racer
- 5 Revolution X
- 6 Fast Draw Showdown
- 7 Suzuka 8 Hours II
- 8 Out Runners

### PINBALLS

- 1 Freddy Krueger
- 2 Addams Family
- 3 Star Trek
- 4 World Cup Soccer
- 5 Guns 'n Roses
- 6 Flintstones
- 7 Corvette
- 8 Rescue 911

## Germany

### VIDEO CONVERSION

- 1 Raiden II
- 2 Super Sidekicks 2
- 3 Aero Fighter
- 4 Raiden DX

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Daytona Twin
- 2 Ridge Racer
- 3 Virtua Fighter
- 4 Cruis'n USA

### PINBALLS

- 1 Freddy Krueger
- 2 Star Trek
- 3 World Cup Soccer
- 4 Addams Family

## Australia

### VIDEO CONVERSION

- 1 Raiden DX
- 2 Street Hoop
- 3 Samurai Shodown II
- 4 Raiden II
- 5 Super SFII Turbo
- 6 King of Fighters '94
- 7 Virtua Fighter
- 8 Super Sidekicks 2

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Daytona Twin
- 2 Cruis'n USA
- 3 Ridge Racer DX
- 4 Suzuka 8 Hours 2
- 5 Lethal Enforcers II
- 6 Outrunners
- 7 Daytona USA DX
- 8 Ridge Racer 2

### PINBALLS

- 1 Freddy Krueger
- 2 Maverick
- 3 Addams Family
- 4 Star Trek
- 5 Guns 'n Roses
- 6 Demolition Man
- 7 Flintstones
- 8 Rescue 911

## United Kingdom

### VIDEO CONVERSION

- 1 Raiden II
- 2 Taito Cup Finals
- 3 Samurai Shodown II
- 3 Alien vs Predator
- 5 Great 1000 Mile Rally
- 6 King of Fighters '94
- 7 Street Hoop
- 8 Super Sidekicks 2

### DEDICATED VIDEO

- 1 Daytona Twin
- 2 Ridge Racer DX
- 3 Daytona DX
- 4 Cruis'n USA
- 5 Lethal Enforcers 2
- 6 Suzuka 8 Hours 2
- 7 Ridge Racer 2
- 8 Out Runners

### PINBALLS

- 1 Freddy Krueger
- 2 World Cup Soccer
- 3 Maverick
- 4 Star Trek
- 5 Guns 'n Roses
- 6 Demolition Man
- 7 Flintstones
- 8 Addams Family





## Point Blank

Namco Ltd



You may see this one in some countries with a 'Gunbullet' nameplate on it, but it's the same game, and it's a pretty good game under any name.

We reviewed the game in November under the Gunbullet tag so this is more of an update.

The game has been in operation for a while now, mainly in Japan, and it's doing quite well against some pretty stiff opposition. As was expected the guns are of great appeal to players as the recoil is very realistic and the new sensing system is very effective in all facets of game play.

The other thing about Point Blank that stands out is the lack of violence, gun games of this type normally leave bleeding bodies all over the joint, but this one is basically non-violent, even though it's a fast moving and high action game.

As would be expected with a Namco game, the graphics are excellent and keep the player entertained at all times. Point Blank entered the Japanese charts in late November at #4 which was quite impressive for what is a moderately priced game.

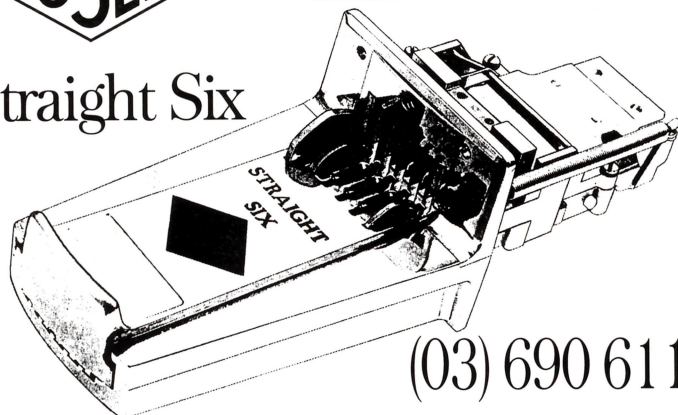
**Verdict:** Looks to be a bit of value in this one, we think it will turn out a pretty good buy and could even be a good proposition for street operators

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## UPDATE Sports Fishing

Sega

How this game is sitting on top of the charts in Japan, way out in front of other Sega games like Daytona Twin, Virtua Cop and Wing Wars, must have Sega as puzzled as it does this writer, but it's been there long enough now to force us to accept that it's not just a flash in the pan.

We noticed at JAMMA that the locals were lining up to get a whack at this one and it's since done very well in the arcades, but whether it's some sort of Japanese phenomenon, or the game will work in other places is not yet known, but it obviously cannot be written off.



**Verdict:**  
Video fishing is a bit beyond this writer's scope.

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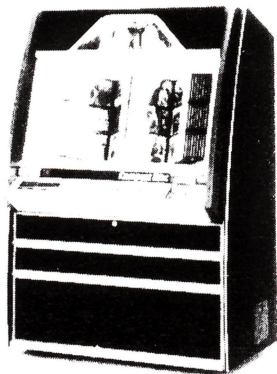
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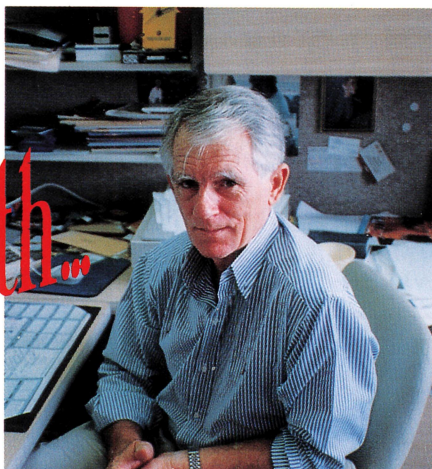
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Till next month...



Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer probably had a happy Christmas, but he's certainly not into spreading Christmas cheer.

None of this "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Man" sort of stuff for him as he calmly told the British coin-op industry that there is blood in a stone and his new tax of £250.00 (approx. US\$450.00) on amusement machines and his extortionate rise in AWP license fees, is going to extract it.

This thoughtless SOB has devastated an industry in one foul swoop. Not a thought has been given to the welfare of a vital UK industry that last year directly employed 125,000 thousand people and put £875 million, plus the income tax of the 125,000 employed, into the Treasury coffers, not a thought....."Stuff you lot, I'm destroying your business, you're industry in fact.....oh, and by the way, have a Happy Christmas"

Where this leaves the coin-op industry in the UK is anyone's guess, they have battled over the last couple of years to get into some sort of shape and just as they can see light at the end of the tunnel, and are looking forward to enjoying the fruits of their labour, along comes this Chancellor bloke and beats them over the head with a tax that is likely to put a lot of operators right out of business.

And if you think that's over reacting, think again, many video games in Britain, for example only take between £30 and £40 a week. Out of say, £35, an operator has to pay the site commission, then pay this git of a Chancellor at least £5 out of his share, leaving him about £12 for depreciation and service of the machine, etc. Operators were already doing it tough, they certainly didn't need a £5 a week levy whacked on and it's obvious that videos will be taken out of many locations.

You've got to feel for the Brits, but the fact that all Chancellors, or Treasurers, are cloned off a master copy, makes it almost inevitable that a Chancellor clone in

some country or countries far removed from Britain will look at this tax and say "aha, here's a nice easy dollar" and put his countries operators out of business too.

It's not hard to imagine that happening here in Australia where the Government is always scratching for ways to rip our dollars off us to give out to the aborigines, the ethnics, the single mothers, the greens, those who won't work, or whoever else they think might vote their way come election time.

Frightening.....so there's no Happy New Year wish for this hungry, thoughtless British Chancellor..... stuff him .....and a good, old fashioned, Cash Box pox on him, he's earned it.

\*\*\*\*\*

On a brighter note our Assistant Editor, Jarrod was as chuffed as any 3 year old could be with the mail he received on his coverage of the recent Queensland Show.

We only did the show coverage that way to break the monotony of so many shows, one after the other, but I was chuffed too, it's great for busy operators to take the time to write letters to, or about a little guy like Jarrod. It's appreciated, and it's a side of this industry that's not often seen.

I was going to tell you that this little bloke who my wife, Barb and I, have sort of inherited, is a bit of a culture shock to us, but on thinking about that for all of a second, I've got to tell you he's not a bit of anything, he's a real, 100% walkin', talkin', jumpin', hoppin', yodelling culture shock of the first degree.

With our youngest child 21, Barb and I were sort of out of touch with 3 year old monsters, and boy, hasn't this bloke livened up the old homestead.

But he's got good taste for a little guy, he prefers a copy of Cash Box to look at rather than kid's books and insists he's going to take over my job, "when he's big"

Jack Rodios

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